



# LOUISIANE

THE MAGAZINE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA AT LAFAYETTE

# TRUE LOVE

Ray Authement has transformed the university, but at a personal cost few would be willing to pay.



**I've** gotten hundreds of colorful PostIt® notes from Dr. Ray Authement since I began working at UL Lafayette in 1993. He attaches them to magazines he receives from other universities and forwards to me.

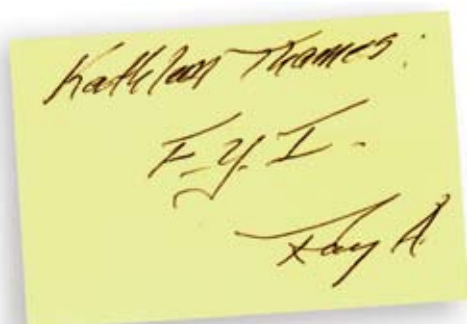
I took the first few dozen for granted; they all looked alike. One day, I noticed a PostIt® note that was different. Instead of "FYI," he had written something like, "Page 20. Article is well done." Of course, I immediately flipped to that page and studied it.

It took quite a few more "FYIs" and a couple more "See inside" messages to grasp what should have been obvious to me from the start: He apparently looks through *all* of the magazines before sending them along. I was amazed because of his already heavy workload.

I've thought about those PostIt® notes a lot since Doc announced in late April that he plans to retire. It occurred to me that they reveal quite a bit about him and how he conducts business at the university.

They are consistent, direct and efficient. They tell me that he has done his homework, that it's important to know what other universities are doing. Their subtler message is: If something is important, find the time to pay attention to it and share it with others.

His little handwritten notes are also a refreshing personal touch in these days of e-mail and text messages.



Believe it or not, we have not told Dr. Authement that this entire issue of *La Louisiane* is devoted to what he has done for the university. We were afraid he would ask us not to pay so much attention to him.

But Dr. Authement's leadership has positively influenced every aspect of the university and countless lives. We believe readers will look at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette in a different way after reading about the remarkable journey he began long before becoming its president.

Quite frankly, I expect to be criticized by some readers for dedicating an entire issue of *La Louisiane* to one topic. But a few years ago, someone asked Doc what advice he would offer students. "When faced with a tough decision, do what you know in your heart is right. That's not always easy but you will look back on your life without regrets," he replied. And so I have.

I'm filled with a sadness that I can't even describe whenever I'm reminded that the steady stream of Dr. Authement's PostIt® notes will soon end.

There is small comfort in a Buddhist proverb I read recently: "If you're facing the right direction, all you have to do is keep walking." Thanks to Doc, the University of Louisiana at Lafayette is facing the right direction.

All we have to do is keep walking.

We hope you enjoy this issue of *La Louisiane*.

— Kathleen Thames

Bold Investment

University Research Park continues to flourish

IN THE LATE 1980s, MOTORISTS DRIVING along Congress Street near Cajun Field saw horses and sheep grazing on property owned by the University of Southwestern Louisiana. When USL President Dr. Ray Authement looked at the same land, he saw the future. In his mind's eye, the farm animals and barns were replaced by research facilities that would boost the local economy while helping the university (now known as UL Lafayette) elevate its stature as a research institution.

By 1990, the livestock had been relocated to the university's farm in Cade, La. Thanks to some influential friends in Washington, D.C., the first tenant in the 143-acre University Research Park – the National Wetlands Research Center – opened for business in 1992.

- Today, the NWRC has lots of company. Its neighbors include:
- the Lafayette Primary Care Facility;
  - the Estuarine Habitats Coastal Fisheries Research Center;
  - Abdalla Hall;
  - the Lafayette Economic Development Authority;
  - the Louisiana Immersive Technologies Enterprise; and
  - Hilton Garden Inn.

Construction of the Cecil J. Picard Center for Child Development is expected to begin soon. Until then, LITE is the newest kid on the block.

With LITE's debut in 2006, UL Lafayette stepped onto the world stage as a leader of technology and innovation. Researchers at LITE use a supercomputer, nicknamed "Zeke," to quickly convert huge amounts of data into 3-D graphical models. Wearing special headgear, they can then immerse themselves in those models. Connections to fiber optic networks enable them to work on projects with collaborators around the globe.

The State of Louisiana, LEDA and UL Lafayette formed a partnership to fund the \$27 million LITE project for the same reason Authement created University Research Park – economic development.

Authement had seen for himself that research can be a powerful economic tool.

His introduction to that concept occurred in 1961, when he spent a year as

a visiting professor at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. UNC, North Carolina State University and Duke University had already formed Research Triangle Park, which would become one of the most successful university research parks in the United States.

South Louisiana would later experience an outrageously prosperous Oil Boom. By the late 1970s, Lafayette had become the "Hub City" for oil companies, large and small. The price of a barrel of crude oil rose from \$14 in 1978 to \$35 a barrel in 1981. A headline in the *New York Times* in 1981 trumpeted: "Lafayette, La.: Home of a Thousand Millionaires."

But just a couple of years later, the price of oil plummeted, taking with it the oil-dependent economies of Lafayette and Louisiana. So much focus had been placed on the oil industry that other sectors of the economy had been neglected.

When state oil revenues dwindled, Authement was forced to reduce the university's budget. From 1982 to 1988, USL endured eight budget cuts that totaled about \$10 million. There were more reductions ahead.

In the mid-1980s, USL decided to become proactive. "We set a goal to help, to create companies and bring jobs," Authement stated in an article published in the May 1, 2002, issue of *The Times of Acadiana*. Ultimately, he created 17 research centers to help reach that goal.

USL needed to entice an "anchor" tenant in University Research Park, just like a commercial developer needs an "anchor" store for a new shopping mall. One of the first prospects was the National Wetlands Research Center in Slidell, La., which was interested in relocating to a site closer to environmental biology researchers. According to a 2003 news release, NWRC scientists "were the first group to document the extent of wetland loss in Louisiana between the 1950s and 1970s."

Authement had positioned USL perfectly about 15 years earlier by strengthening its Biology Department. One way he accomplished that was by reducing faculty members' teaching loads so they could conduct more research. It was a move that paid off in a big way.

"In 1990, a national team of biologists visited the state's biology departments and chose USLs as the most outstanding, sparking a special citation to the department from the state Board of Regents," stated Dr. Dar-

ryl Felder, head of the Biology Department, in an article published in the Summer 1992 issue of *La Louisiane* magazine.

So University Research Park was a viable option for the NWRC. But other universities across the country were courting that agency, too. So, Authement called for some federal firepower.

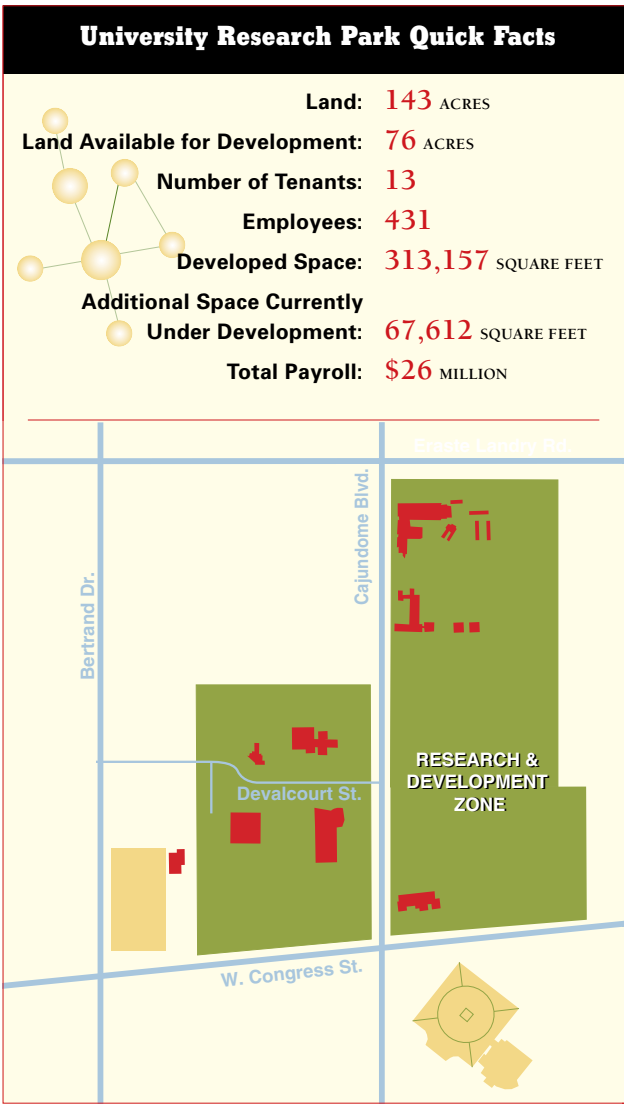
"We needed two things: first, funding, and second, the cooperation of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Sen. Bennett Johnston secured the funding by virtue of his place on the Interior Appropriations Subcommittee. Equally important, Sen. (John) Breaux won over the Fish and Wildlife Service, by virtue of the great respect he commands in the Capitol on environmental issues," Authement said in 1988.

Louisiana's Congressional delegation was probably at the peak of its power, due in part, to its seniority. For the next few years, it continued to help send federal projects and funding to USL.

• In 1996, Johnston delivered a \$10 million EETAP grant, which was the biggest research grant in the school's history.

• USL was named one of only four NASA Regional Application Centers in the United States the same year.

• The federal Estuarine Habitats Coastal Fisheries Research Center opened in University Research Park in 1998. It's owned by the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration. ■



Research Park Tenants At A Glance

USGS NATIONAL WETLANDS RESEARCH CENTER

Biological research is conducted here to help protect, restore and manage natural resources, especially fish, wildlife and wetlands in the South.

LAFAYETTE PRIMARY CARE FACILITY

This is used to train medical residents in family practice. It represents a cooperative effort by Lafayette General Medical Center, Our Lady of Lourdes Regional Medical Center, LSU Medical Center, University Medical Center and UL Lafayette.

ESTUARINE HABITATS COASTAL FISHERIES RESEARCH CENTER

Owned by the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration, the center houses offices and labs for agencies such as the National Marine Fisheries Service and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

ABDALLA HALL

Occupants of this university-owned building include the Center for Business and Information Technologies and the Energy Institute.

LAFAYETTE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Its mission is to contribute to economic growth in Lafayette Parish. It does that in many ways, such as by helping local companies develop markets and by recruiting business and industry.

LOUISIANA IMMERSIVE TECHNOLOGIES ENTERPRISE

Its three-story, egg-shaped glass enclosure reflects the advanced technology inside. LITE gives university researchers and private industry access to supercomputers that can convert massive amounts of data into graphical images. Using special equipment, researchers can then immerse themselves in those images.

HILTON GARDEN INN

This 155-room hotel is also an educational resource for UL Lafayette students who are majoring in hospitality management. It includes classrooms and faculty offices.

CECIL J. PICARD CENTER FOR CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Construction is expected to begin in early 2008. The Center is a multi-disciplinary group of evaluation and research professionals that focus on early childhood, K-12 education and lifelong learning. Applied research is continually conducted in all areas of child education, health and well-being.



## Rising Star

Math, Computer Science Departments rank among nation's elite

**I**N OCTOBER, THE NATIONAL SCIENCE Foundation announced that the University of Louisiana at Lafayette has one of the top 100 mathematics departments in the country.

UL Lafayette's Computer Science Department is among the top 60 university computer science departments in the country, according to the NSF.

The latest rankings are based on the amount of external funding the departments received in 2004.

Dr. Ray Authement, president of UL Lafayette, has stressed research during his 33-year presidency. UL Lafayette's computer science program has long been recognized for its innovation because of the attention he focused on it as president.

Having a math department that's among the top 2 percent in the nation is another indication that UL Lafayette's stature as a research university is growing, said Dr. Bradd Clark, dean of UL Lafayette's College of Sciences.

It also reflects the breadth of research conducted at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. That scope was acknowledged in 2006 when the Carnegie Foundation designated it as a "Research University with High Research Activity." Universities in that category includes Clemson, Auburn and Baylor universities. The only other Louisiana institution in the same category is the University of New Orleans.

"One or two departments will not get you that designation by the Carnegie Foundation," Clark said. "You have to have breadth."

The high rankings for UL Lafayette's Mathematics Department and Computer Science Department are significant for another reason: a growing cross-discipline approach to research.

At UL Lafayette, for instance, mathematical modeling is being used to

make projections related to biological issues and health issues.

Dr. Azmy Ackleh, a professor of applied mathematics, has attracted about \$2 million in research funding from agencies such as the NSF and National Institutes of Health. He is especially interested in using mathematical modeling to predict population trends.

For instance, he and Dr. Jacoby Carter, an ecologist at the USGS National Wetlands Research Center, developed

a computer model that enables them to predict nutria population dynamics and movement patterns.

Ackleh and some colleagues at other schools are also working on a project that uses mathematical modeling to test policies related to alcohol consumption by college students. Their efforts could someday be used to help curb binge drinking by college students across the nation.

Ackleh has received NSF funding to establish a mathematical-biology option for undergraduates.

Computers are central to such collaboration. "We're building a generation of scientists that is accustomed to using the computer as a tool. Math is a language of science; a good mathematician is a translator. A mathematician can translate biological questions into formulas that can then be looked at by a computer. The computer is being used, through the modeling lens, as a tool," Clark said.

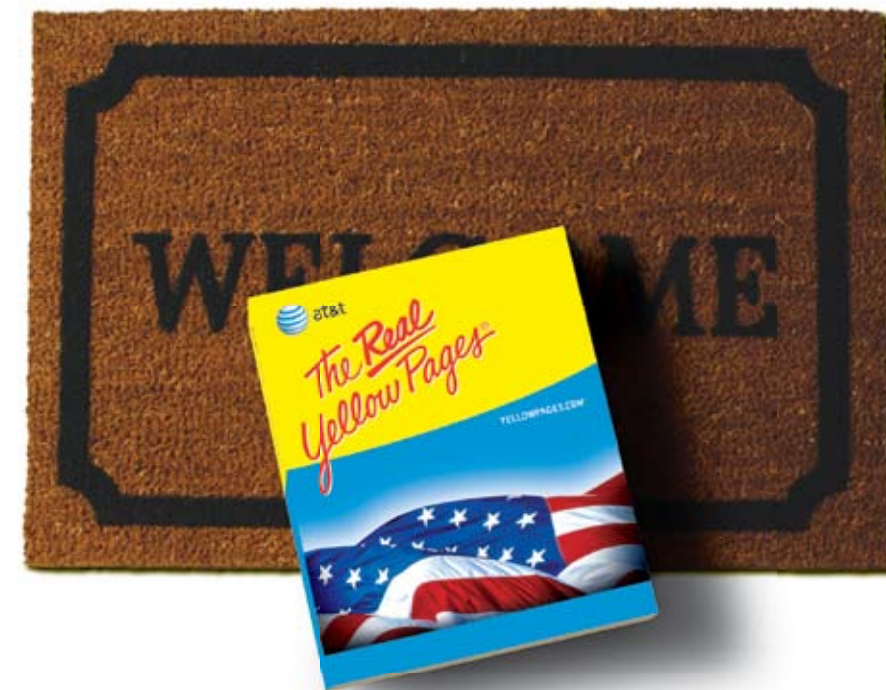
UL Lafayette has the expertise and computer power needed for complex projects. Its Center for Advanced Computer Studies, for instance, is a leader in grid computing.

UL Lafayette's Louisiana Immersive Technologies Center has a supercomputer that's connected to the Louisiana Optical Network Initiative. LONI is a state-of-the-art fiber optics network that links research universities in Louisiana. LONI is also part of the National Lambda Rail, which connects universities across the United States.

"As UL Lafayette gets involved in more and more complex questions, the need for more and more power is available. So we have the ability to work with data sets that are huge. That capability is allowing us to bring in strong young researchers. They become excited about the possibilities," Clark said. ■

### Current Research Centers

Cecil J. Picard Center for Child Development  
Center for Advanced Computer Studies  
Center for Analysis of Spatial and Temporal Systems  
Center for Business and Information Technology  
Center for Ecology and Environmental Technology  
Center for Gifted Education  
Center for innovative Learning and Assessment Technologies  
Center for Louisiana Inland Water Studies  
Center for Louisiana Studies  
Center for Structural and Functional Materials  
Center for Telecommunication Studies  
Cognitive Evolution Group  
Corrosion Research Center  
Doris B. Hawthorne Center  
Energy Institute  
Health Informatics Center of Acadiana  
Institute of Cognitive Science  
Ira Nelson Horticulture Center  
Louisiana Accelerator Center  
Louisiana Immersive Technologies Enterprise  
Microscopy Center  
NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service  
Regional Application Center  
X-Ray Center



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## A Promise Kept

Students remain at the top of Authement's priority list

**S**TUDENTS FIRST. That's a pledge Dr. Ray Authement made when he became president-elect of the university in July 1973. He was speaking to an early orientation and registration session for freshmen who would enter the University of Southwestern Louisiana a couple of months later.

He has honored that commitment, according to many former students and colleagues. "I don't think there's much that students asked for that he didn't give," said

Raymond Blanco, UL Lafayette's vice president for Student Affairs.

During his 33 years as president, Authement has stayed in touch with students, formally and informally. He has provided scholarships to as many qualified students as he could and has helped keep tuition as low as possible. Along the way, he has influenced countless young men and women through his guidance.

One constant in Authement's presidency has been a standing meeting with Student Government Association leaders each week.

Sarah Berthelot, chief of philanthropy at United Way of Acadiana and president of Junior League of Lafayette, was SGA president for the 2005-06 term. So, she met with the president regularly.

"Dr. Authement listened to concerns and most often, entertained solutions provided through the student perspective," she said. "For the record, I never got a 'No.' On all occasions, he would immediately pick up the phone or send a memo to respond to our concerns. . . This accessibility enhanced the abilities of the SGA to represent the concerns of students."

She recalled meeting with Authement for the first time as SGA president. "I was rather nervous about requesting to move offices serving students with disabilities to another location due to issues with a handicap lift. I knew it was a big request but it was a serious issue presented by several students."

"Doc had assembled all representatives from the administration who worked directly with that office to hear our concerns. We presented our information and then Dr. Authement asked the office to move to increase accessibility and asked for everyone's support. At that moment, I understood the value Dr. Authement placed on the 'student voice.'"

For many years, the president has

informally greeted students on the first day of class of the fall semester. Along with other university officials, he stood on the corner of Rex Street and St. Mary Boulevard to hand out free doughnuts, fresh fruit and bottled water.

Sometimes, he worked the sidewalk like a dignified carnival barker. "It's the only free thing you'll get on campus this year," he would joke to students walking past, or "I was up all night baking these doughnuts!"

Authement began his career as a physics lab instructor, while a senior majoring in physics at SLI. After earning master's and doctoral degrees in mathematics, he taught at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge, La., and McNeese State University in Lake Charles, La. He returned to SLI in September 1957 as an associate professor of mathematics. He was named a professor two years later and continued to teach until 1966, when he was promoted to academic vice president.

Della Bonnette, UL Lafayette's vice president for Information Technology, was a student in one of his math classes. "He would write a math proof on the blackboard, stand aside and ask the class, 'Isn't that beautiful?'" she said in a 1997 interview.

Authement was named a University of Southwestern Louisiana Foundation Honors Professor in 1965.

He had the most interaction with students from 1966 to 1970, when he was USL's academic vice president, and from 1970 to 1973, as vice president. The 1960s and 1970s were decades of major social change in the United States. Students on university campuses across the nation were discussing and debating issues such as the Vietnam War, race relations, Watergate and marijuana use. There were a few students demonstrations on USL's campus then.

Authement's wife, Barbara, said students would sometimes go to the Authements' house on campus to meet with him after USL had closed for the day. "They would come to talk and leave at 5 o'clock in the morning. We'd stay up all night with them," she said.

There were other times when students showed up unexpectedly on the Authements' doorstep to celebrate. In the 1980s, for example, a Student Government Association referendum calling for USL's name to be changed to the University of Louisiana was approved by students. About 50 students wanted to share the victory with Authement.

"We opened the door and there they stood. So, we pulled out all the snacks in the house and fed them," she said.

Authement inherited a problem that stemmed from USL's rapid growth after World War II ended – more cars than parking spaces on campus. "A class boycott and demonstration in front of Martin Hall have been called for Wednesday to protest the lack of action by the University administration on the traffic and parking situation on campus," stated the lead story on Page One of the Nov. 1, 1974, issue of *The Vermilion* USL's student newspaper.

A photo on the front page of the Nov.

8, 1974, issue of *The Vermilion* shows Authement being presented with a giant replica of a parking ticket during a protest that drew more than 200 students.

University officials implemented "parking lot control methods" that designated which cars could park in certain parking lots. In 1976, a shuttle system was introduced. Students parked their vehicles by Blackham Coliseum and were transported to campus by bus. Parking was later moved to Cajun Field's parking lot. In 1983, a lottery was created to give students a chance to "win" a prime spot to park on campus.

The university's first parking garage is



University President Dr. Ray Authement gives a student an apple on the first day of the Fall 2006 semester. For many years, he and other UL Lafayette administrators have welcomed students back to campus each fall by handing out water, fruit and doughnuts.

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under construction at the intersection of St. Mary Boulevard and Taft Street.

Throughout his career, Authement has particularly empathized with students who are the first in their families to attend a university. “I was a first generation student, so I know what they feel. I’ve always tried to represent them in the best way that I could,” he said in an interview with *La Louisiane*.

The university president has also

caused by fluctuating state revenues. From 1982 to 1988, during the Oil Bust in Louisiana, USL suffered eight budget cuts totaling about \$10 million, for instance.

He has stressed maintaining the university’s budget in ways that would impact students the least, such as controlling administrative costs and limiting the amount spent on maintenance and repairs. In 1993, for example, USL faculty, staff and administrators served

for years – in Louisiana,” she said.

Soon after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita devastated south Louisiana in the fall of 2005, Gov. Kathleen Blanco announced a freeze on state spending. Officials needed to assess the storms’ impact on the state’s finances.

“I was scheduled to speak to a group of parents. So I went to Dr. Authement beforehand and asked, ‘What can I tell them about scholarship offers for the 2006-07 school year?’ He said, ‘You can tell them that I’m going to do everything in my power to keep the offers the same that we have in the past few years,’” Bulliard said.

Authement’s daughter, Julie Authement Johnson, said her father’s own experience as a student motivated him to help others. “Academically it came easy to him, but financially, just to stay in school every day was a struggle, to have enough money to buy books to be able to study. You have to know that hunger for education and hunger to learn. I think that translates now into his desire to see everybody have access to education.”

Providing access for students has not only been linked to financial assistance. In the 1970s, for example, the university offered some classes on a special schedule to accommodate people who worked in the oil field “seven and seven.” They worked offshore for seven days and then returned to land for seven days off.

Also, after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita shut down colleges and universities in south Louisiana, Authement extended the registration deadline at UL Lafayette. About 800 displaced students signed up for classes.

It’s impossible to determine how many individual students Authement has helped over the years. But sometimes he’ll mention the success of former students, such as Paul Cloutier. Authement was a math professor at SLI when Cloutier was attending high school in Opelousas, La. One of Cloutier’s teachers recognized he had exceptional talent; she asked Authement to meet with him.

Authement also saw Cloutier’s potential. So, he gave the young man a couple of computer kits.

“Computers were just coming out then...You could buy a little computer kit for \$60 or \$70. You could wire it and energize it with batteries and it could



Former SGA President Sarah Berthelot, Dr. Ray Authement and Former SGA President Shawn Wilson.

add, subtract and multiply. I thought Paul was someone who would enjoy that,” Authement said in a 2004 interview.

Cloutier connected the kits and figured out how to use the computers to make the phone ring, creating a primitive computerized phone system. He had offers to attend MIT, Cal-Tech and Princeton after graduating from high school, but he chose to enroll at SLI instead.

Cloutier went on to become principal investigator of 13 NASA ionospheric sounding rocket probes. He was lead investigator on the Pioneer Venus Bus and Orbiter Ion Mass Spectrometer experiments.

Shawn Wilson is another student who was influenced by Authement. He’s a confidential assistant in the Office of the Secretary of the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development. He served as USL’s Student Government Association president in 1994 and was elected president of the UL Lafayette Alumni Association in 2004.

Wilson said Authement treated him and other student leaders with respect. “He allowed us to disagree, he allowed us to object and he also allowed us to make mistakes. . . He never strong-armed me or other students and I’ve been pretty close to other past SGA presidents and past Alumni Association presidents.”

Wilson noted that Authement was always thinking ahead. “Many days, I’d go into his office – about to ask for something – and he would already know what I was going to

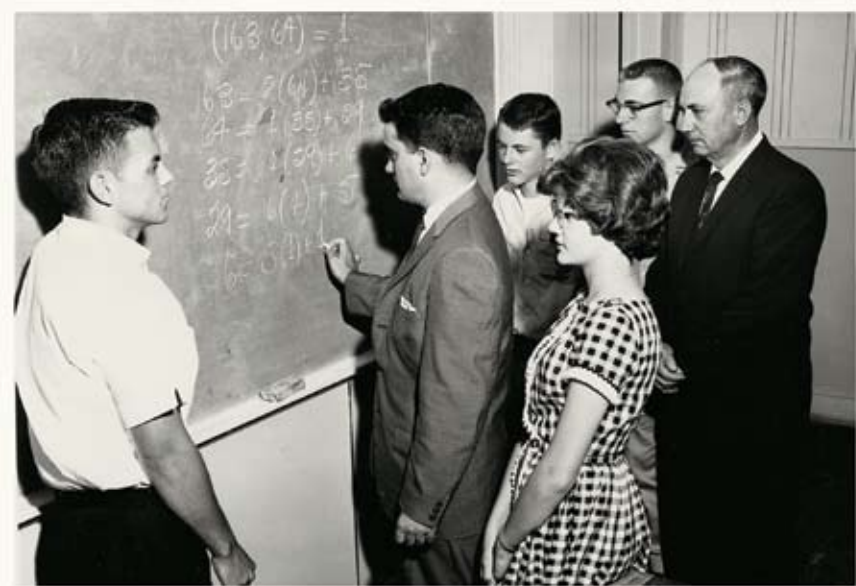
ask. He would already be committed to say ‘No, and this is why,’ or ‘Yes, and here’s how I’m going to help you.’ I’ve never known him to absolutely say flat out ‘No,’ without an alternative or a better option made available. He will always find a way to achieve your goal, maybe not with your strategy.”

As a USL student, Wilson worked with Authement to secure financing for construction of the Student Aquatic Center on campus. Students approved a self-assessed fee that ultimately funded it. The center opened in 2002.

Wilson said Authement showed him how to “stay focused on a long term vision and not let it change the lenses that I use to see the present environment.”

When Authement was dealing with a controversial matter, Wilson assumed it would dominate the president’s attention. “But there were other issues of advancement for this institution that he was very much focused on. That, in and of itself, is a tremendous skill and gift and talent. It’s so easy to be distracted by what’s right in front of you that you forget about where you’re trying to end up at the end of the day.”

Berthelot said she treasures a letter Authement sent to her as she neared the end of her term as SGA president. “He expressed his gratitude for my service and well wishes for the future. I have placed it next to my diploma because the education I received while solving student problems – through collaborations such as Doc’s – was also an education in itself.” ■



Ray Authement shows students a mathematical formula. He earned a bachelor’s degree in physics from Southwestern Louisiana Institute in 1950. After obtaining master’s and doctoral degrees, he taught at LSU in Baton Rouge, La., and McNeese State University in Lake Charles, La., from 1954 to 1957.

related to students who have struggled financially to attend UL Lafayette.

He grew up in Boudreaux Canal, a small fishing community just a few miles north of Cocodrie, La., near the coast. He saw how hard his parents worked to support him and his five brothers and sisters. Neither of his parents had advanced beyond the 7th grade but they believed education was the ticket to an easier, more prosperous life.

Authement remembers asking his father whether, after graduating from Terrebone High School, he should stay home to help with the family business or seek a job elsewhere. His father insisted that he go to college. “I said, ‘We can’t afford it.’ Dad said, ‘We’ll afford it.’”

So, Authement entered SLI in 1947 with a small scholarship.

During his presidency, Authement has faced many financial challenges

twice as many students per employee as the national average, according to figures from the U.S. Department of Education.

Today, UL Lafayette’s tuition is one of the lowest in the nation, thanks to comprehensive scholarship and financial aid programs, including out-of-state fee waivers to qualified students.

Adele Bulliard, director of UL Lafayette’s Scholarship Office, said Authement’s commitment to helping students financially is evidenced by the number and total dollar amount of scholarships awarded. For the past seven or eight years, he has made sure that every UL Lafayette student who was eligible and applied for a scholarship, received one – even if they weren’t all large amounts.

“We’re the only university in the state that does this. He’s very proud of that. And I would say that we make some of the best scholarship offers – and have

## On the Lighter Side

*How much do you know about UL Lafayette President Dr. Ray Authement? Test your knowledge by taking this quiz. Here’s a clue: The correct answers may surprise you.*

**1. Dr. Clyde Rougeou, UL Lafayette’s fourth president, gave Authement this nickname:**

- a. T-Ray
- b. Stud
- c. Buddy

**2. The president does not have one of these in his office in Martin Hall:**

- a. bookcase
- b. potted plant
- c. computer

**3. Authement collects:**

- a. chess sets
- b. dimes
- c. calculators

**4. He has never traveled to:**

- a. Europe
- b. Washington, D.C.
- c. California

**5. The president likes to tell:**

- a. knock-knock jokes
- b. Boudreaux/Thibodeaux jokes
- c. ghost stories

**6. He once planned to become:**

- a. a priest
- b. a chef
- c. an engineer

**7. What does he speak fluently?**

- a. Pig Latin
- b. French
- c. Spanish

**8. Which of these sports did Authement play in high school?**

- a. football
- b. soccer
- c. squash

**9. To unwind after a stressful workday, he likes to:**

- a. work a crossword puzzle
- b. try to solve mathematical puzzles
- c. cook

**10. He hates to:**

- a. have his photo taken
- b. attend Ragin’ Cajun basketball games
- c. go fishing

Answers: 1. b 2. c 3. b 4. a 5. b 6. c 7. b 8. a 9. b 10. a



## Lasting Mark

Campus reflects advancement during fifth president's term

**M**ORE THAN 30 BUILDINGS WERE constructed and more than 25 facilities were expanded or renovated during Dr. Ray Authement's presidency.

Campus development since 1974 includes the addition of University Research Park, the Cajundome and adjacent Convention Center, the Advanced Computer Technology Research Center, Paul and Lulu Hilliard University Art Museum, Moody Hall and Abdalla Hall.

The university also acquired:

- 600 acres in Cade, La., for agricultural use;
  - the former Lou Ana Gardens in north Lafayette, a 51-acre tract that's now UL Lafayette's Center for Ecology and Environmental Technology;
  - Gulf South Research Institute in New Iberia, La., which is now known as the New Iberia Research Center; and
  - several residences near campus.
- A parking garage is under construction on campus. ■



PHILIP GOULD



**ADVANCED COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY AND RESEARCH HALL** The \$9 million facility, which opened this year, houses the Center for Advanced Computer Studies and the Computer Science Department. Features include a motion capture lab, 161-seat auditorium, nanotechnology lab and video conference room. Its supercomputer is connected to the Louisiana Immersive Technologies Enterprise in University Research Park. The building faces Girard Park Circle.



**ESTUARINE HABITATS COASTAL FISHERIES RESEARCH CENTER** The second facility built in University Research Park is owned by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Occupants include a variety of federal and state agencies, as well as Ducks Unlimited. The building design earned a premier award presented by the American Institute of Architects in 2002.



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**MOODY HALL** This \$10 million, three-story structure on Hebrard Boulevard was built for the B.I. Moody III College of Business Administration. It opened in 2005. High-tech classrooms, laboratories, conference rooms and a large auditorium are located here, along with faculty offices. Moody Hall is officially an expansion of F. G. Mouton Hall. The buildings are connected by two walkways. F. G. Mouton Hall was completely renovated in 2006. It contains classrooms and meeting rooms.



PHILIP GOULD



PHILIP GOULD



**EDITH GARLAND DUPRÉ LIBRARY** A \$14 million renovation and expansion project, completed in 2000, transformed UL Lafayette's library. About 88,000 square feet were added and it's now one of the most technologically advanced university libraries in Louisiana. The interior design emphasizes convenience for students; the exterior maintains the Georgian architectural style of many buildings on campus. The library was constructed in the 1960s.



**FORREST K. AND CHANTAL DOWTY FOUNDATION CENTRE** The 6,000-square-foot home of the UL Lafayette Foundation opened in 2000 at the intersection of St. Mary Boulevard and Taft Street. It features offices, an elegant rotunda and a large board room. Its Greek revival style incorporates some of the elements of the Foundation's previous office building on Girard Park Drive, which was designed by architect A. Hays Town.



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**PAUL AND LULU HILLIARD UNIVERSITY ART MUSEUM** In 2004, a stunning art museum made of steel, stone and glass opened on UL Lafayette's campus. It literally mirrors architect A. Hays Town's striking design of an adjacent plantation-style building. Cascading water on a free-standing granite wall offers a tranquil space between them. Visitors who step inside the museum are treated to more wonders, such as a 5,000-square-foot gallery that is the largest free span gallery of any museum in Louisiana.

↓  
**LEGACY PARK** Apartment-style housing for students opened on campus in 2003 at the intersection of Girard Park Circle and East Lewis Street. Eight buildings can accommodate 468 students; additional buildings are in the planning stage. Units feature washers and dryers, cable television, Internet access, private balconies or patios and nine-foot ceilings. There is a gated parking lot for Legacy Park residents' vehicles. McCullough Dorm, a seven-story, unoccupied men's dorm, was imploded to make room for Legacy Park.



PHILIP GOULD



PHILIP GOULD



⇒  
**FLETCHER HALL** For UL Lafayette art and architecture students, Fletcher Hall becomes a home away from home. Its resources include a stereoscopic virtual reality lab that enables them to display architectural, interior design, industrial design and animation models in 3-D; a metals fabrication lab; a well-equipped wood fabrication lab; a 145-seat proscenium theater used for studio productions; and sophisticated equipment and software for computer animation. Fletcher Hall opened in 1977.



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PHILIP GOULD



**BOURGEOIS HALL** Located on Cajundome Boulevard, it provides recreational resources for students, as well as classrooms and faculty offices. Offerings include: racquetball courts, an indoor track, a weight room, exercise equipment, basketball courts and aerobics classes. Outside, the Student Aquatic Center is one of the most sophisticated facilities of its kind in the South, with an eight-lane lap pool, leisure pool, large spa and sand volleyball courts. A major expansion is planned for Bourgeois Hall; the project is in the design stage.



**CAJUNDOME** This 12,800-seat multipurpose arena opened on UL Lafayette's campus in 1986. It's the home of Louisiana's Ragin' Cajuns® basketball team. Concerts and other large events, such as commencements for UL Lafayette and area high schools, are held here. In 2005, the Cajundome became an emergency shelter for thousands of south Louisiana residents forced from their homes by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.



In 2002, the \$16.7 million **CONVENTION CENTER** opened for business next door to the 'dome. The complementary facility provides nearly 100,000 square feet of meeting space on two levels. Its versatile design enables it to be used for a sit-down dinner for 2,000 people or for a convention or trade show. Both buildings are used for social events during Mardi Gras.



PHILIP GOULD



PHILIP GOULD





PHILIP GOULD



#### LOUISIANA IMMERSIVE TECHNOLOGIES

**ENTERPRISE** LITE is a \$27 million immersive visualization facility in University Research Park. A three-story, egg-shaped enclosure, known as a Total Immersive Space, is a focal point. At LITE, a supercomputer can convert huge amounts of data into 3-D graphical models. Wearing special equipment, researchers can immerse themselves in those models in the TIS. LITE is the first facility of its kind to provide affordable data visualization to private companies as well as university and government researchers.



PHILIP GOULD



PHILIP GOULD



**LIFE SCIENCES BUILDING AT THE NEW IBERIA RESEARCH CENTER** The 30,000 square-foot facility has laboratories, conference rooms and offices for staff, researchers and students. It also contains a specialized housing and cognitive testing facility for 20 adult chimpanzees. The NIRC provides nonhuman primates used for applied and basic research aimed at promoting human quality of life. About 5,000 nonhuman primates reside there.



**USGS NATIONAL WETLANDS RESEARCH CENTER** University Research Park's first tenant opened in 1992. Scientists here conduct biological research and development related to protecting, restoring and managing natural resources, such as Louisiana's fragile coast. A spatial analysis team provides maps, remote-sensing research and geographic information systems.



PHILIP GOULD



# CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT, 1974-PRESENT

## CONSTRUCTION

- Advanced Computer Technology and Research Center
- Bourgeois Hall
- Cajun Village
- Culotta Tennis Center
- Cade Dairy Barn and Lab
- Cafe Fleur-de-Lis
- Cajundome
- Cajun Track Complex
- Convention Center
- Day Care Center
- Forrest K. and Chantal Dowty Foundation Centre
- Fletcher Hall
- Lafayette Primary Care Facility
- Legacy Park
- Leon Moncla Indoor Practice Facility
- Life Sciences Building (at New Iberia Research Center)
- Louisiana Accelerator Center  
(former Acadiana Research Lab)
- M.L. "Tigue" Moore Field
- Moody Hall
- Multipurpose Facility at the Alumni Center
- Paul and Lulu Hilliard University Art Museum
- Printing Services
- Rougeou Hall
- Student Aquatic Center
- University Research Park
  - Abdalla Hall
  - Estuarine Habitats Coastal Fisheries Research Center
  - Hilton Garden Inn
  - Lafayette Economic Development Authority
  - Louisiana Immersive Technologies Enterprise
  - National Wetlands Research Center
  - Primary Care Center
- Visitor Information Center

## LAND/FACILITY ACQUISITIONS

- 600 acres in St. Martin Parish for Cade farm
- 69-acre Gulf South Research Institute (now the New Iberia Research Center)
- Hawkins House
- Roy House
- 51-acre Lou Ana Gardens (now the Center for Ecology and Environmental Technology)
- Heymann House, Property (now the Alumni Center)

## UNDER CONSTRUCTION

- Parking Garage
- Burke-Hawthorne Hall expansion, renovation

## MAJOR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

- Fiberoptic Network
- Burial of overhead utility lines
- Replacement of electrical distribution system

## MAJOR RENOVATIONS/EXPANSIONS

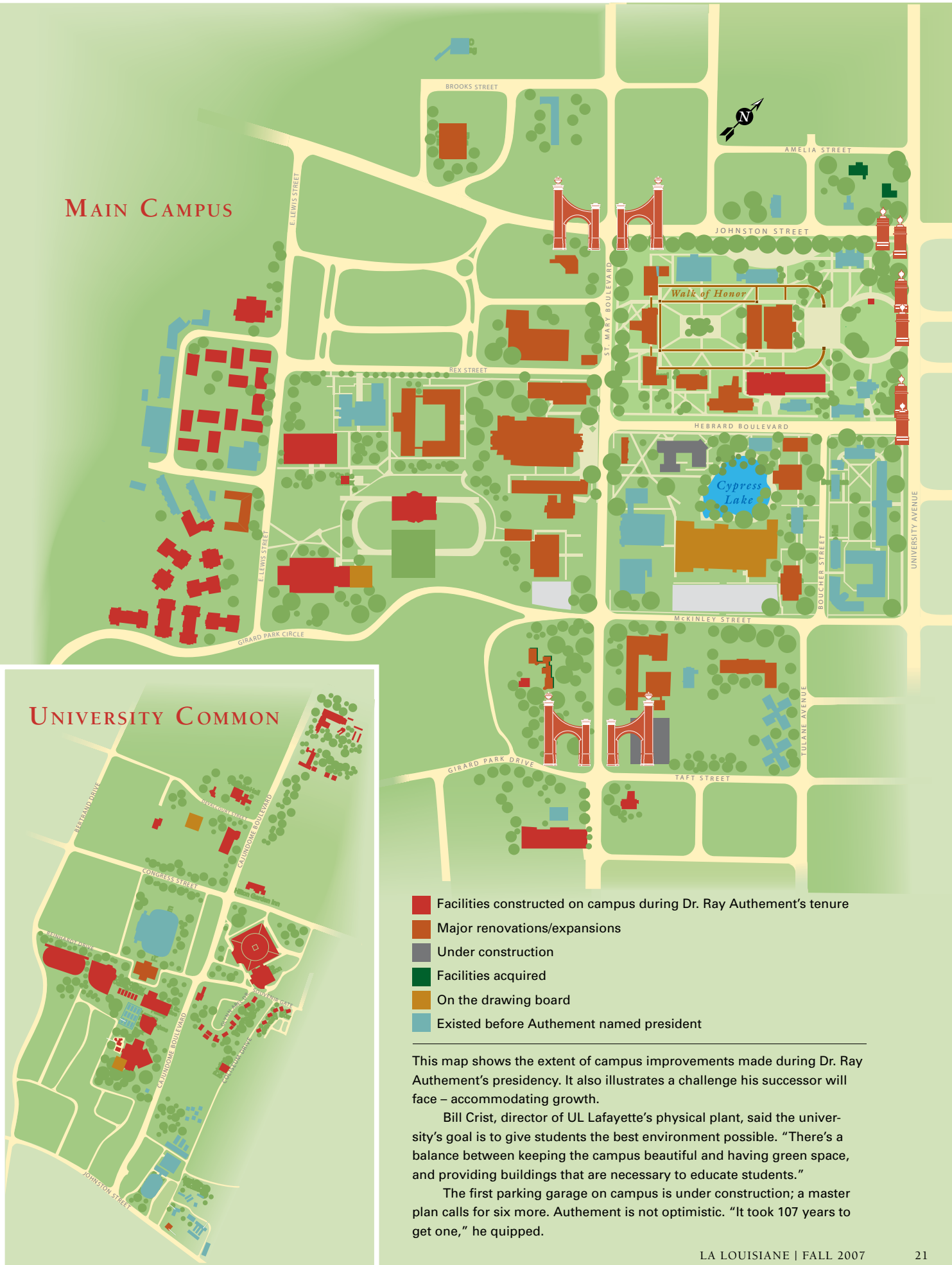
- Angelle Hall
- Athletic Complex
- Bank One Building (Small Business Development Center)
- Billeaud Hall
- Broussard Hall
- Conference Center
- Continuing Education Center (former Eckerd building)
- Coronna Hall
- Earl K. Long Gym
- Edith Garland Dupré Library
- F. G. Mouton Hall
- French House
- Guillory Hall
- Hamilton Hall
- Heymann House (now the Alumni Center)
- Judice-Rickels Hall
- Lee Hall
- Madison Hall
- Marine Survival Training Center
- Martin Hall
- McLaurin Gym
- Montgomery Hall
- Mouton Hall
- New Iberia Research Center (nonhuman primate facility)
- O.K. Allen Hall
- On the Geaux (former Snack Hut)
- Parker Hall
- Stephens Hall
- Track/Soccer Complex
- Whittington House

## ON THE DRAWING BOARD

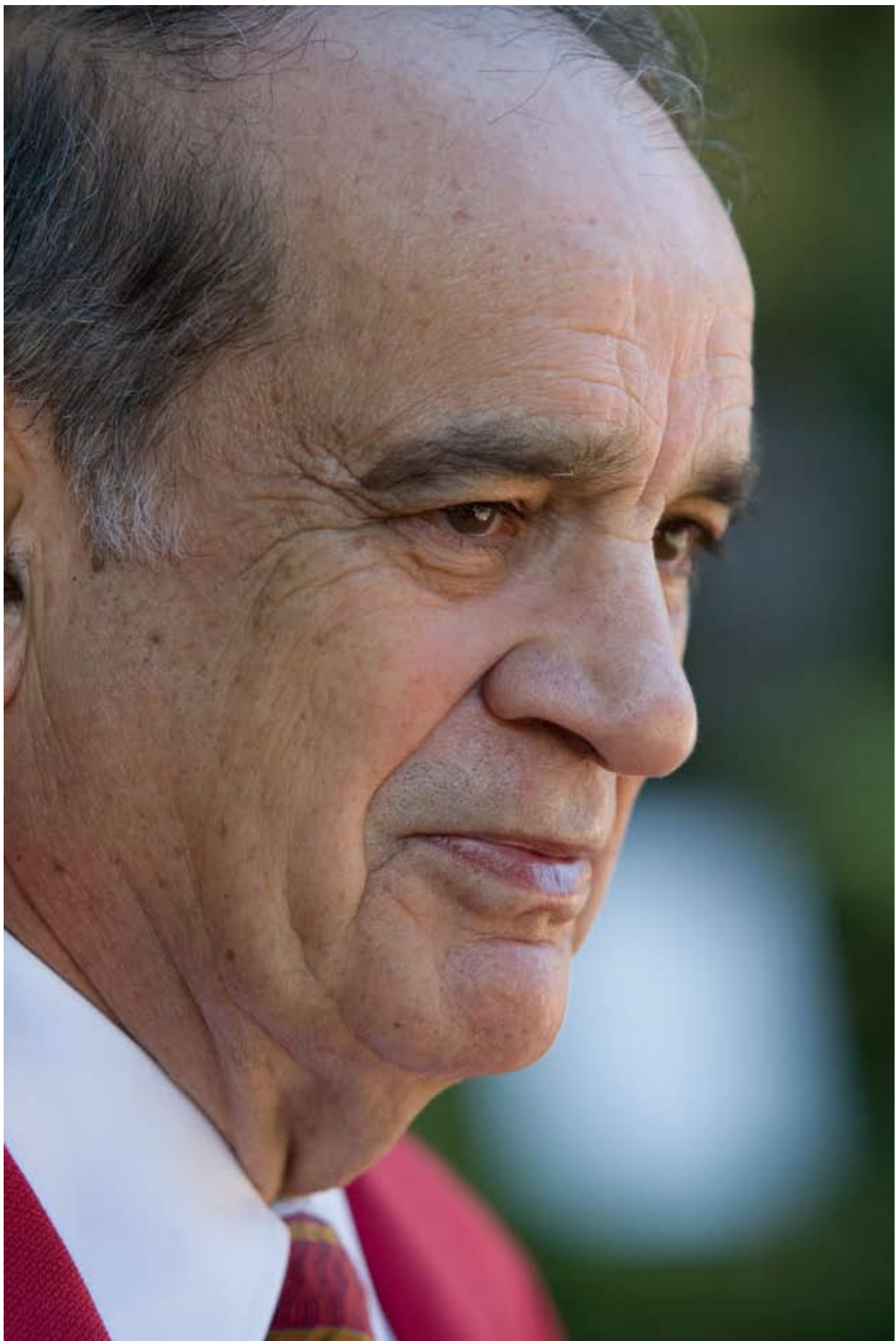
- Cecil J. Picard Hall
- Bourgeois Hall expansion
- Student Union expansion, renovation
- Fletcher Hall annex

## REMOVED

- Voorhies Dorm
- McCullough Dorm
- McNaspy Stadium
- Vet Village
- SGA Day Care Center







# TRUE LOVE

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To put Dr. Ray Authement's tenure at UL Lafayette in perspective, consider this: a child born in 1974 – the year he was named president – could have grown up, graduated from college and had children of his own by now. ¶ Authement is the longest-serving president of a public university in the United States. But that's just one aspect of a personal story that rivals the plot of a made-for-TV movie. ¶ A synopsis: A boy in a remote bayou town grows up to lead Louisiana's second largest university to regional and national prominence. He devotes himself to the university, putting its success above almost everything else. As he begins to contemplate retirement, his eldest daughter is diagnosed with leukemia. She dies a year later. ¶ Here's the twist, the part in a movie that would leave viewers shaking their heads over how life can take such unexpected turns: When grief threatens to consume him, it is the university that saves his life.

**BY KATHLEEN THAMES**

**PHOTOGRAPHY BY PHILIP GOULD**



# “You have served as our ‘dean,’ both as a leader for our System office and presidents. You’ve also been a friend – the best friend higher education has had. Thank you for giving us your life.”

DR. SALLY CLAUSEN, PRESIDENT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA SYSTEM

**THE UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA** at Lafayette has had only five presidents in its 107-year history. Three of them dominated the school’s development: Dr. Edwin L. Stephens, Dr. Joel L. Fletcher Jr. and Authement.

Combined, their presidencies spanned 96 years and four school names.

Such longevity on a college campus is uncommon. In 2006, the average term of a university president was 8.5 years, accord-

ing to a study conducted by the American Council on Education. That’s up from 6.6 years in 2001.

Serving as president of a university is not for the faint-hearted.

A *Chicago Tribune* article, published in 2006 after the University of Chicago hired a new president, offered a job description. “Wanted: an educational visionary with the political skills of a senator and the diplomatic polish of a secretary of state. The

successful candidate will be a scholar of national prominence, a charismatic speaker, a successful fundraiser. Bold leadership required; affable personality preferred.”

It describes the post as “a job where the spotlight is bright, stakes are enormous and, some say, expectations are impossible to meet.

“The president is a university’s public face, its most important fund-raiser, its biggest cheerleader at athletic events, its academic steward, its dreamer of big dreams and the person who must take the heat from faculty, parents, students, alumni, trustees and even lawmakers when things go wrong.”

Without knowing it, the *Chicago Tribune* reporters who wrote that article described Authement almost perfectly. The only omissions? His money management skills, which are so refined that he can almost squeeze 11 dimes out of a dollar. And, an unusual combination of supernatural memory and extraordinary attention to detail; it forms a tightly woven net that keeps little from getting past him.

**SHY AND OFTEN TACITURN**, Authement prefers for his accomplishments to speak for him. They are numerous. Collectively, they paint a portrait of a man who is patient, shrewd, persistent, innovative, self-confident and prescient.

He is well known as president of the second largest university in Louisiana and widely acknowledged as one of the most influential leaders in Acadiana. But few people have the opportunity to get to know Ray Authement or to witness how much he and his family have willingly sacrificed for the university.

Family members and university personnel who have worked with him closely for many years offer insight into his character and reveal the intensity of his devotion to UL Lafayette. They

describe a man guided by a moral compass that never fails him. Someone who is sensitive but whose judgment is not colored by emotion. And they portray him as one of those rare individuals who finds the greatest reward in giving.

Some critics claim that Authement’s frugality and micromanagement have held the university back in some ways. Others blame him for UL Lafayette’s failure to become a college football powerhouse. And, some critics equate longevity with being worn out.

But two crucial aspects of Authement’s presidency are indisputable.

Above all, throughout his entire career, he has been responsible for many major developments that propelled UL Lafayette, Acadiana and Louisiana forward. And, everything he has achieved professionally has been for the university’s benefit, never his own.

In an interview a few years ago, Dr. Joseph Savoie, Louisiana’s commissioner of higher education, characterized the president’s service. Authement, he said, transformed the university, “almost totally by his dedication, commitment and unselfishness.

“He never used the place to further himself. He has always used himself to further the place.”

**RIGHT AFTER** Hurricanes Katrina and Rita devastated south Louisiana in 2005, Gov. Kathleen Babineaux Blanco froze state spending. Officials needed to assess the state’s financial condition.

In an attempt to cut costs, Authement adjusted the university’s hours of operation. Prior to the storms, the workday was from 7:45 a.m. to 11:45 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. By starting 15 minutes earlier and working an additional 30 minutes on Monday through Thursday, however, buildings could be closed on Friday afternoons to reduce utility consumption.

Soon after the revised schedule was implemented, a department head dropped by Authement’s office at about 4:35 p.m. to speak with him. He was told the president had left for the day. A couple of minutes later, Authement reappeared in the doorway.

“I walked outside and saw the parking lot full of cars. I thought to myself, ‘We have some dedicated employees.’ Then it hit me: We don’t close at 4:30 any more!” Authement reported. He went into his office, flipped the lights back on and sat down at his desk to work until 5 p.m.

It’s a telling anecdote.

It illustrates Authement’s work ethic. “He is willing to work as hard as anybody on this campus and probably harder than anybody,” said Dr. Steve Landry, UL Lafayette’s vice president for Academic Affairs.

Like many CEOs of major corporations, the president’s workday doesn’t end when he walks out of his office at 5 p.m. It just changes locations. He often works at home at night if he’s not attending a board meeting for a civic organization or he’s not at a Ragin’ Cajun athletic event.

Few people would have begrudged the president a 30-minute head start that day. But Authement doesn’t make decisions based on what others may or may not think. He is able to erase emotion from any situation before asking himself: What’s best for the university in the long run?

“I admire his courage to take on an issue without regard for any early feedback and sensationalism that surrounds it. He has had enough experience to know how the public reacts. If he has an issue that

he’s pretty confident about, he’ll ride that wave and then find a way through it. It’s not blind courage. It’s informed courage,” Landry observed.

The anecdote also brings to mind an observation often attributed to best-selling author H. Jackson Brown Jr.: “Our character is what we do when we think no one is looking.”

**IN LATE APRIL**, when Authement announced his intention to retire, Dr. Sally Clausen, president of the University of Louisiana System, thanked him for his service.

“You have served as our ‘dean,’ both as a leader for our System office and presidents. You’ve also been a friend – the best friend higher education has had. Thank you for giving us your life,” she said.

Her reference to Authement’s dedication to the University of Louisiana at Lafayette was not an overstatement, according to people who know him well.

Authement’s wife of more than 50 years, Barbara, jokes that if he were asked to choose between her and UL Lafayette, she’s not sure which he would pick. It’s a polished one-liner that usually draws a chuckle from her audience, but she glances away when she delivers it. What many people may not know is that it is *her* unwavering support that has enabled Authement to concentrate so completely on the university.

Julie Authement Johnson, the Authements’ youngest daughter, is a consultant in Atlanta. She grew up watching her father pour his energy into running the university and was affected by his devotion to his work. The family would plan to take a vacation, for example, but the needs of the university would always come first. If a budget crisis arose before they could leave town, the vacation had to be scrapped. Or, vacations could be cut short.

Johnson learned from her mother how to cope with the demands of the university. In their own ways, her parents taught her that, sometimes, love means putting other people’s needs first.

Barbara Authement ultimately found a way to avoid the stress of abbreviated vacations, for instance. “I told him, ‘Ray, why don’t we travel with the football team?’ So, we leave on Fridays at 12 o’clock and we come home on Sunday mornings. He has Sunday to rest and recuperate and we can go out to dinner. We’ve been doing that for many years. It has



*Dr. Ray Authement’s workday has already started. He reviews a publication before a round of appointments begin.*



avoided a lot of arguments.”

Johnson said Authement’s dedication to UL Lafayette is matched only by Barbara Authement’s dedication to her husband.

“When my father was in graduate school, my mom worked to put him through school. I think that set the tone for their relationship. She was always the supporter, the one behind the scenes who enabled him to achieve whatever he wanted to achieve. In some relationships, spouses or partners might feel threatened by the other’s success. I think it was just the opposite with them.”

**WHEN RAY AUTHEMENT** was a senior at Terrebonne High School in Houma, La., he addressed the freshman class. His future wife was one of the students in the audience. But it wasn’t until Authement was attending Southwestern Louisiana Institute (now known as UL Lafayette) that they met. Barbara was a friend of Authement’s sister, Norma. When visiting Norma one day, Authement’s mom urged Barbara to meet her son, Ray.

“He was what I had been looking for,” Barbara Authement would recall more than 50 years later.

She had enrolled at SLI but changed her plans when she began dating Authement. Although he was a student, he also taught a physics lab; the school discouraged instructors from dating students.

Barbara Braud and Authement married about a year after they were introduced by his mother.

**BARBARA AUTHEMENT**

is an extrovert who’s comfortable in social settings and quickly puts others at ease. She is opinionated and often outspoken among friends. Despite the differences in their personalities, she and Authement complement each other.

“He’s my best friend and I’m his best friend,” she says, simply.

Johnson said her mom injects levity into the university president’s life. “She takes situations that would sometimes be

overwhelming and serious and she allows him to see the humor in them. She allows him to relax. When he’s with my mother, he is more at ease than any other time I ever see him.

“He genuinely enjoys her company and genuinely feels better, safer and happier with her by his side. I think that’s the biggest compliment that anybody can receive.”

Although Barbara Authement has always been supportive of her husband, she has also pursued her own interests. For many years, she worked in the oil industry. She played tennis and was active in civic groups.

The transition to a more public role – the result of Authement’s promotions at the university – was an issue she addressed directly.

“When Ray said he was going to be vice president, I told him, ‘I have a request of you: Do not ask me to change. I cannot.’



*Barbara Authement prepares to cut a cake during a reception held in 1984 to mark her husband’s 10th anniversary as USL’s president.*

And he said, ‘I wouldn’t love you if you did.’ So that was the main hurdle.”

She paused for a moment before adding, “I told him, ‘Don’t fuss if I get out and work in my flower beds!’ ”

**THE LATE HERBERT HEYMANN,**

a Lafayette businessman, was a close friend of the Authements. “I’ve had the pleasure of knowing all five of the university’s presidents and by far, the best was Barbara Authement,” he would joke.

Barbara Authement does act as a sounding board for her husband.

“She waits for him to get home and has dinner with him every night. That’s when she asks about his day and that’s when he shares what’s going on and probably at that time, because he has had so much information coming in all day, that’s his time to process. She offers him a chance to think out loud,” Johnson said.

“Mom’s the old-fashioned wife who always makes sure his shirts are ironed, his dinner is ready. She takes care of everything. She literally makes sure he has nothing to worry about but the day ahead of him. It’s nice.

“She’ll tell me, ‘He couldn’t survive without me.’ I don’t think she could survive without having him to support and take care of. That’s where she gains her pleasure in life – taking care of him. It’s a unique, enviable way to be, I think.”

Johnson said some of the family’s toughest times were when Authement was aggressively pursuing a name change for the University of Southwestern Louisiana. It was a controversial issue.

“I remember him feeling so passionate about the need for a name change and others coming out against it. I remember my mom’s support. She would always tell him, ‘You’re doing the right thing.’ At times when maybe he faced opposition, either from the community or within the university, she just stood by his side and said, ‘Honey, keep at it. You’re doing the right thing.’

“She can influence him to a point, but when he has his mind made up, she says ‘Well, then that’s the direction we’re taking.’ ”

Johnson said her parents react differently to criticism of him. “Whereas he is thick-skinned and can say ‘Well, people will understand in time,’ she sees him attacked and takes it personally for him.”



*The Authements relax on a beach vacation. They remain best friends after 50 years of marriage.*

**THE AUTHEMENTS’** first child, Kathleen “Kathy” Authement, was born May 3, 1952, while Ray Authement was in Graduate School.

“When Dad was writing his dissertation for a master’s degree, he would take care of her at night. They didn’t have a crib, they had a dresser and she was in the dresser drawer next to him. She kept him company,” Johnson said. “There was a bond between the two of them that was extremely special.”

Kathy earned a bachelor’s degree from USL in 1975 and a master’s degree in special education in 1982. A special education teacher at Duson Elementary, she married Philippe E. Prouet, a Lafayette architect.

Kathy shared Authement’s passion for Ragin’ Cajuns® sports, especially men’s basketball. They would sit next to each other at home games. When he traveled to out-of-town games without her, they would talk by phone – sometimes before the game had ended.

In 1998, on the day before Thanksgiving, Kathy was diagnosed with leukemia. Her son, Philip, was 12 years old; her twin daughters, Lauren and Michelle, were 9.

The next year was spent coping with



*The Authements and their eldest daughter, Kathy, in June 1975.*

comment was not surprising. Speculation about his retirement had been swirling. He had reached many of his goals. UL Lafayette was already planning a year-long Centennial celebration that would begin in

her illness and seeking treatments for it.

On Nov. 29, 1999, Kathy died.

Johnson said her parents grieved privately. “To the rest of the world, they put on a pretty good face,” she recalled. “But I thought at the time, ‘I don’t think Dad can make it through this...’

Even with his wife’s support, Authement seemed lost, Johnson said. “That was the darkest of hours. Only his religious faith got him through that.”

Faith and the University of Louisiana at Lafayette.

Personnel in Martin Hall could see Authement’s grief expressed on his face and in his dark eyes, which would sometimes fill with tears when anyone mentioned Kathy’s name.

Before his daughter’s death, Authement had spoken at an annual luncheon held for retired university personnel. He told them that he expected to be sitting among them the next year. In a sense, his

1999. So, the timing seemed right.

The president’s plans were suspended when Kathy became ill. In the somber days after her death, he seemed lost in a world that was suddenly different, one that he could not control. He gravitated to what he knew best, the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, a familiar place that could distract him from his sorrow.

Authement pursued new goals as aggressively as ever before. For instance, he managed a \$130 million building boom on campus that ultimately resulted in the construction of 10 buildings and the Student Aquatic Center, as well as the renovation or expansion of 11 university facilities.

“By concentrating on projects, he was able to slowly heal,” one university insider noted. At the same time, Authement turned his attention to his three grandchildren.

Johnson is married to Chris Johnson of Atlanta. She said the birth of their first child, Jacob, in 2004 seemed to be a turning point for her father. “When Jacob was born, it was the first time

in a long time that I could see the sparkle in his eye again. It was as if Jacob were proof that life goes on and he found such joy in a new grand baby.”

In August, Michelle and Lauren entered UL Lafayette as freshmen. Phillip will graduate from UL Lafayette in the spring. When Kathy was near death, Authement promised her that he would personally present Phillip with his diploma.

Johnson said Kathy is never far from Authement’s thoughts.

“There have been so many times after my sister’s death when Dad has said, ‘Oh, how much fun it would be to share this with Kathy,’ like when he saw Phillip keep a perfect 4.0 grade point average. Or when he talks about when Phillip will graduate, he’ll say, ‘How proud she would be.’

“He holds onto that thought and how much she would find joy in everything that is accomplished at the university.”

And Authement finds great pleasure in all the university has to offer his grandchildren and future generations. ■



*Jacob Johnson*



# Dr. Ray P. Authement

**BORN:** Chauvin, La.

**MARRIED:** Former Barbara Braud; two daughters, Kathleen (deceased) and Julie; two grandsons; twin granddaughters

**EDUCATION:**

1950 Bachelor of Science, University of Southwestern Louisiana, Lafayette, La.  
Major Field - Physics  
Minor Field - Mathematics

1952 Master of Science, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, La.  
Major Field - Mathematics

1956 Doctorate, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, La.  
Major Field - Mathematics  
Minor Field - Physics

**EXPERIENCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION:**

**September, 1954 - August, 1956**  
Instructor of Mathematics  
LSU, Baton Rouge, La.

**September 1956 - August 1957**  
Associate Professor of Mathematics  
McNeese State University, Lake Charles, La.

**September 1957 - August 1959**  
Associate Professor of Mathematics  
USL

**September 1959 - Jan. 30, 1966**  
Professor of Mathematics  
USL

**1962-63 Session**  
Visiting Professor of Mathematics  
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

**Feb. 1, 1966 - June 30, 1970**  
Academic Vice President  
USL

**July 1, 1970 - June 30, 1973**  
Vice President  
USL

**July 1, 1973 - July 25, 1973**  
Acting President, USL

**July 26, 1973 - June 30, 1974**  
President-Elect, USL

**July 1, 1974 - Present**  
President, University of Louisiana at Lafayette, formerly USL



Clockwise, from top left, graduation from Terrebonne High School, 1947; as a young man; SLI graduation, 1950; with Miss America, Judy Ford; an early computer at USL; with U.S. Sen. John Breau; as King Gabriel XXXVI with his wife, Barbara; a family portrait, October 2007; with Barbara Authement; with New York Yankees pitcher Ron Guidry; and as King Cotton XXII in 1975. Center: Authement at work.  
Photos courtesy of Barbara Authement.



# LESSONS IN LEADERSHIP

For anyone interested in acquiring or polishing management skills, UL Lafayette President Dr. Ray Authement has been a walking textbook for more than three decades.

He has steered the university deliberately and confidently as it has advanced from a solid regional university to one worthy of national and international attention.

His list of major achievements is impressive, by any measure. Under his leadership, for example, the university:

- changed its name to the University of Louisiana at Lafayette;
- implemented academic admission standards;
- became the first Doctoral II university in Louisiana;
- has always competed in NCAA Division I, the highest level of collegiate competition;
- increased its gifted assets from about \$500,000 to more than \$150 million;
- weathered numerous financial crises caused by state revenue woes;
- helped diversify the economy by establishing 17 research centers;
- has been ranked in the



same research category as Baylor and Auburn by the Carnegie Foundation; and

- has constructed more than 30 buildings and facilities, and renovated or expanded more than 25 others.

Dr. Steve Landry, vice president for Academic Affairs, has professionally interacted with Authement on many levels. At UL Lafayette, he has been a doctoral student, faculty member and researcher, department head, center director and university administrator.

“It’s a very enlightening process to study an individual who has had so much success. I think there’s a lot for people to learn from him about principles of management,” Landry said.

Below is a brief look at some key aspects of Authement’s leadership.

## MANAGEMENT BY WALKING AROUND

Dr. Ramesh Kolluru arrived at UL Lafayette in 1992 as a graduate student.

“I was so surprised to see Dr. Authement walk into the lab on a weekly basis, asking for updates, progress on my projects. I would tell him I was waiting for a part to come

in and that it would come in a week or 10 days. Sure enough, 10 days later, he would be back in the lab, asking me if the part had come in and how it fit into my research.

“It was amazing to me, that as a graduate student, he took such an individualized interest in my work. Here he was, the president of the university, with a million or so things to do on a daily basis. And yet, that essentially is what defines him.”

## FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

For more than 30 years, Authement has relied on the skills of Ovey Hargrave, UL Lafayette’s vice president for Business and Finance. Their diligence has kept UL Lafayette financially sound.

In late 1993, for instance, the university became debt free, when it paid what it owed on dormitories and other auxiliary facilities. “This accomplishment allowed us to contain our dormitory fees and meal tickets, in spite of escalating expenses,” Hargrave said.

And, every year, for the past 15 years, faculty members have received raises.

“Dr. Authement was able to make a lot of good decisions because he always knew exactly what our financial condition was,” Hargrave said.

## PRIORITIES AND PERSEVERANCE

When Authement became president of USL in 1974, state revenues were limited. He decided to direct as much money as possible to the burgeoning field of computer science.

“I believed that if we were perceived as being great in one area, we would be perceived as great in other areas,” he explained in 1994. He was vilified at the time by some faculty and students who resented his concentration on one academic area. But USL became nationally recognized for its computer science program. As finances



Sherry Young, left, has been secretary to the president for 22 years. Administrative assistant Julie Leday, center, has worked in the president’s office for 16 years.

would allow, Authement turned his attention to other departments and programs.

He remained patient when striving to reach his goals. He pushed for almost 20 years to get USL’s name changed, for instance.

## VISION AND PASSION

“Vision and passion have long been a winning combination for Dr. Authement and certainly for UL Lafayette,” said Julie Simon-Dronet, director of Public Relations and News Services for nearly half of Authement’s presidency.

“His vision is truly remarkable. Is it guesswork? No. He is a gatherer of information and has a methodical mind that, I believe, maps out game plans. He’s so driven by passion for moving this institution forward that he stays the course until it’s done.”

## INTEGRITY

“Over the years we’ve experienced many challenges at the university and he has never asked me to do anything that I was

uncomfortable with or tried to mislead anyone to advance a cause. In crisis, we’ve been on the same page – truth-seekers,” said Simon-Dronet.

“He does not rush to volunteer information because that’s not his personality but when asked for information, you will get the truth.

“I believe that if you were to ask Dr. Authement what he would most like to be known for, it would be his integrity. I can only think of twice over the past 16 years that he was truly upset about something university-related. On both occasions his integrity was

wrongfully questioned. I know his integrity to be impeccable.”

## ATTENTION TO DETAILS

Some critics accuse Authement of micro-managing. “My style is to educate myself on a daily basis about what’s going on in the university and what areas are moving forward. That way, you can better assist people in reaching their goals,” Authement said in a recent interview.

According to Landry, Authement’s ability to focus on details also enables him to prevent trouble. “You can handle a lot of things as little problems before they become big problems.”

And, attention to detail has been crucial in managing the university’s money, said Hargrave. “You have to know where your resources are coming from, where they are being spent. You set goals and you set priorities, but if you don’t manage your financial resources, then sometimes it’s hard to achieve your goals.” ■

1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1980	1981	1982	1983
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Dr. Clyde R. Rougeou, president of USL, begins year-long leave of absence</li><li>■ Dr. Ray P. Authement becomes acting USL president</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Center for Louisiana Studies is established</li><li>■ First Lagniappe Day held on campus in the spring</li><li>■ Constitutional Convention creates new higher education governing boards</li><li>■ USL acquires Van de Graaf accelerator from NASA</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Stephens Memorial Library converted to a computer center</li><li>■ Authement reigns as King Gabriel XXXVI during Mardi Gras</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ USL hosts French President Giscard D’Estaing</li><li>■ Shuttle bus transportation system begins operation</li><li>■ Authement receives prestigious Order of the Palms from the French government for efforts on behalf of french bilingualism in Louisiana</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Gumbo U established</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Louisiana Legislature approves \$18 million for a new convention and assembly center</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ College of General Studies established</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Offers first master’s degree in computing engineering in the Southeast</li><li>■ USL Foundation five-year endowment fund drive begins</li><li>■ Banks join forces to make biggest donation in university’s history, \$750,000 to be invested for academic enrichment.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Only university in nation to offer bachelor’s degree in electrical engineering with telecommunications option</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Parking lottery begins</li><li>■ Recession begins/ Louisiana governor proposes budget cuts</li></ul>



# PRIME TIME AT UL LAFAYETTE

What are Dr. Ray Authement’s most significant achievements as the fifth president of the University of Louisiana at Lafayette?

Here’s a quick look at some of them.

You can read about two others – the creation of University Research Park and campus development – beginning on pages 2 and 10, respectively, of this issue.

### NAME CHANGE

In the early 1980s, Authement introduced a proposal to change the name of the University of Southwestern Louisiana to the University of Louisiana. There were plenty of reasons to seek a name that better reflected the school’s stature.

- Research showed that a “double-directional” name, such as “Southwestern Louisiana,” was three times more likely to identify two-year community colleges than four-year universities.

- A new name would improve the university’s ability to recruit the brightest faculty and students.

- It would increase the perceived value of the university’s academic degrees.

- The new name would enable the university to better compete for the nation’s top scientists and most prestigious research grants.

- More NCAA Division 1 teams would



On Sept. 10, 1999, USL was declared the University of Louisiana at Lafayette.

want to compete with Ragin’ Cajuns® on the court, field or track.

- It would increase donors’ pride in their affiliation with the university.

For a brief time in 1984, USL was able to adopt a new name – the University of Louisiana. But a subsequent court challenge nullified the move

It was a setback for Authement and other name change supporters but they refused to give up. Instead, their efforts became a crusade.

In 1995, the Louisiana Legislature

changed the name of the Board of Trustees for Colleges and Universities to the University of Louisiana System. It also allowed two institutions to change their names at the same time to the University of Louisiana at their geographical locations.

Four more years passed before a second school in the UL System – Northeast Louisiana University in Monroe – was willing to change its name too. “University of Louisiana at Lafayette,” was declared on Sept. 10, 1999, at a celebration held to kick off UL Lafayette’s 100th birthday.

### SELECTIVE ADMISSIONS

Until 1999, anyone who earned a high school diploma was eligible to attend the University of Louisiana at Lafayette.

But an open admissions policy could be detrimental to students unprepared to perform college-level work. More than likely, they hadn’t received scholarships, so they took out loans for tuition, books and living expenses. So, if college didn’t work out, they had a debt to pay.

Open admissions was costly for USL, too. Remedial courses were expensive. And, the state provides more funding for upper-level students than freshmen. Taxpayers were paying for a student’s education twice – first in high school and then in remedial classes.

Continued on page 35

# President’s tenure ‘has been transforming’

BY DR. GARY MAROTTA

Dr. Gary Marotta served as UL Lafayette’s vice president for Academic Affairs from 1989-1999. A self-described “recovering administrator,” he is now professor of history at Buffalo State College, the largest four-year college in the State University of New York system. Marotta is former University Dean at Long Island University and former provost of Buffalo State College.

The University of Louisiana has been fortunate to have had a number of remarkable presidents in its long history; their stewardship, at key moments, has been decisive. But President Ray Authement’s tenure – of unprecedented duration and intensity – has been more than decisive; it has been transforming.

Today, the University commands regional and national, indeed global, recognition. It is a recognition grounded in the academic and research core of the University, identified by distinguished programs in each of its colleges. A strong and productive faculty, an aspiring student body, committed alumni, all supported by state of the art infrastructure, backed by endowments, have been assembled. And that is what matters and that is what endures – a place that cherishes the human mind.

The impact of Dr. Authement is, I believe, comparable to the impact that President Charles William Eliot had on Harvard in the late 19th century and Nicholas Murray Butler had on Columbia in the first half of the 20th century. The transformation of the University during Dr. Authement’s



Dr. Gary Marotta

presidency, from a provincial to a nationally competitive institution, has been achieved in the face of financial and political densities of resistance. By consolidating authority on campus, partnering with city and parish, astutely avoiding dangers, mastering details, and pursuing a large vision, Dr. Authement has overcome the obstacles and created a modern, dynamic university.

There is an e-mail I send to my graduate students; it says, “The main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing.” The message helps them to sustain the focus on the essence of the research projects or theses they are developing. Once they grasp its import, they get the job done. I do not recall the source of the aphorism, but it is the big lesson I have learned from

Dr. Authement. The “main thing” is not some strategic plan vetted by the university stakeholders. It is in Dr. Authement’s head. But we can discern its shape in the details of decades of decisions and projects. Look around to see their fruits: nothing less than the University of Louisiana.

I have worked with several university presidents and chancellors, in both the public and independent sectors. All have been smart, all have been dedicated, but none as tireless or as determined as Dr. Authement. He is not, like too many higher education CEO’s, a careerist, opportunist, or mere image-maker. The University of Louisiana is not smoke and mirrors. It has been built the old fashioned way: through long-term engagement, attention to detail and hard work.

Dr. Authement knows how to order priorities, make adjustments, get results – and survive. No mean feat in Louisiana, or any place else in higher education for that matter. He is not an easy man to work for because he believes in equality: He believes that everybody should work as hard and as smart as he does. If we did, he implies, we would be contributing to the building of a great institution, and that would invest our lives with meaning. And so it does.

It was extraordinary to be on his team. What kind of team was it? It was a track team, and I had a 10-year run. Others fell out earlier, some continued the pace. But the best run of all was that unprecedented, intense long-distance run – the one that transformed the University. ■

1984	1986	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ USL becomes University of Louisiana briefly</li><li>■ Center for Advanced Computer Studies created</li><li>■ University acquires Gulf South Research Institute in New Iberia, La. (now NIRC)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Cajundome opens</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ University awards its first doctorate in computer engineering</li><li>■ Budget woes prompt 10-hour, four-day work week during summer session</li><li>■ Apparel Computer Integrated Manufacturing Center (A-CIM) created</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ CACS connects to Internet</li><li>■ Marine Survival Training Center opens</li><li>■ La Louisiane magazine debuts</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Creation of Walk of Honor announced</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ USL Alumni Association purchases Heymann family residence on St. Mary Boulevard for use as an alumni center</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Authement undergoes open heart surgery</li><li>■ USL achieves SREB Doctoral II status</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Office of Minority Affairs created</li><li>■ Enterprise Center of Louisiana, a business incubator, opens</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ USL becomes third university in world to offer doctorate in Francophone studies</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Louisiana Legislature creates the University of Louisiana System; paves way for USL name change</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ University receives \$10 million federal EETAP grant, biggest research grant in school history</li><li>■ Ragin’ Cajuns® becomes federally registered trademark</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Enrollment reaches all-time high of more than 17,000</li><li>■ Investing in Our Future campaign begins</li><li>■ Investing in Our Future fund drive chairmen establish endowed chair in Authement’s name</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Estuarine Habitats and Coastal Fisheries Center opens</li></ul>



‘Real Leadership Is Very Unselfish...’

How did Dr. Ray Authement remain an effective, innovative university president for more than 30 years?

That’s a question Dr. Sally Clausen, president of the University of Louisiana System, is particularly qualified to answer. She served as state commissioner of higher education and was president of Southeastern Louisiana University from 1995 to 2001. Earlier this year, she was inducted into the Louisiana Political Hall of Fame.

Clausen noted that university presidents must satisfy many “bosses,” including state education boards, state and federal lawmakers, parents, students, faculty, sports fans and community leaders. So, university presidents are “decision makers by consensus and if you cannot draw consensus around major issues, you cannot succeed. Anyone who can attain consensus over such a long period of time is truly an amazing leader.

“You do so by the sheer power of your drive, your intellect, your personality and your willingness to understand the big picture,” she said.

Effective university presidents know their ideas and actions will sometimes be controversial and “sometimes very difficult. Yet, they have the courage of conviction

of a moral leader to do what is right by the people they represent.”

Authement has those qualities – and more, she continued.

“He’s dedicated. He has vision. He works hard. He collaborates with people and sometimes he has to make some isolated decisions, knowing that he’s going to take some heat.

“But his vision has always been impressive because he seems to anticipate where the university ought to be in the next few years and makes conscious decisions now to ensure that it gets there. Otherwise, we wouldn’t have University Research Park, the LITE Center, the Paul and Lulu Hilliard University Art Museum or Moody Hall. We wouldn’t necessarily have well over \$100 million in endowments.

“So many things that he has envisioned and worked to accomplish are the sheer genius of his thoughtful anticipation, while always, however, staying in tune with the politics of the area, the state politics, the students and their needs, and the faculty’s need for resources.”

Clausen noted that Authement doesn’t seek the limelight. “His quiet, daily work, every day, day in and day out, on little issues and big issues, keeps the

enterprise moving forward.

“Real leadership is very unselfish and he is one of the most unselfish leaders that I’ve ever worked with. He sets high expectations. He shares. He stays engaged. He encourages. He’s not afraid of assessment. He’s always in direct contact with students. In fact, he keeps his focus on the students. He believes that diversity is something that should define us but not divide us; he embraces it. And, he changes with the times.”

Authement earned credibility over the years by building a record of success, Clausen said.



Dr. Sally Clausen

COURTESY OF UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA SYSTEM

Members of the University of Louisiana System

- Grambling State University, Grambling, La.
- Louisiana Tech University, Ruston, La.
- McNeese State University, Lake Charles, La.
- Nicholls State University, Thibodaux, La.
- Northwestern State University, Natchitoches, La.
- Southeastern Louisiana University, Hammond, La.
- University of Louisiana at Lafayette, Lafayette, La.
- University of Louisiana at Monroe, Monroe, La.

“And he doesn’t break his word. Trust is not built overnight and the power of his word, his trustworthiness and his follow-through instilled confidence in those who were affected by his decisions. I think that’s the mark of a real leader and history will, I believe, reflect on him as one of the great leaders of our time.” ■



Dr. Ray Authement looks down on Cajun Field from a stadium skybox.

Continued from page 32

But until 1998, Louisiana did not have a statewide community college system, so there were few postsecondary options. Once one was established, UL Lafayette implemented selective admissions, gradually raising the academic requirements.

The results are gratifying: The average ACT scores and high school GPAs of incoming freshmen have been rising steadily. And, UL Lafayette has attracted a record number of high school valedictorians.

So, UL Lafayette’s graduation rate will rise, too, in coming years.

DOCTORAL II

For the average person, USL becoming a Southern Regional Economic Board Doctoral II university in 1992 was hardly a reason to pop open a bottle of champagne. But for the university, it was cause for celebration.

One reason: The Louisiana Board of Regents allocates more state funding to Doctoral II universities. So, UL Lafayette received an extra \$2.023 million.

That “big step” took five years to achieve. It started when Authement committed to an expansion of the doctoral fellowship program at USL. The fellowship program steadily increased the number of doctoral candidates at the university.

NCAA DIVISION 1

After the National Collegiate Athletic Association decided in 1973 to create competitive divisions, only three Louisiana universities chose to join the top tier – Division I.

They were: Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge, La.; the University of Louisiana at Lafayette (then known as the University of Southwestern Louisiana); and Tulane University in New Orleans.

In general, larger schools compete in Division I.

NCAA Division I members voted in 1978 to create three subdivisions, I-A, I-AA and I-AAA. Again, the larger universities sought the top tier, I-A. So did Authement.

Ultimately, all major Louisiana universities joined Division I. But not all made the climb to Division I-A. This year, there are four state, public universities in Division I-A: LSU, UL Lafayette, UL Monroe and Louisiana Tech.

In addition to conveying prestige, the Division I-A designation affects guarantees and scholarships. “Guarantees” refers to the amount a team will pay an opponent to entice it to play. Guarantees are much bigger in Division I-A. Also, Division I-A programs can offer more scholarships.

NCAA Division I-A affects the status of other university sports by increasing a school’s visibility and boosting its image.

Dan McDonald, a sports writer for *The Advertiser*, Lafayette

Leading the Way

DURING DR. RAY P. AUTHEMENT’S PRESIDENCY, UL LAFAYETTE HAS BUILT AN IMPRESSIVE RECORD OF ‘FIRSTS.’ SOME EXAMPLES:

FIRST UNIVERSITY IN LOUISIANA TO:

- acquire MULTICS computer system (second in the nation after MIT)
- install a fiber optic backbone on campus
- earn a Doctoral II research designation
- develop a center dedicated just to job creation
- use computerized patient simulators to train student nurses
- obtain an atom smasher
- have its students design and launch a working satellite
- establish an Americorps service learning program
- create a finance, insurance and risk management program
- compete in the prestigious DARPA Grand Challenge for robotic vehicles (CajunBot)
- establish a marine survival training center
- offer a bachelor’s degree with specialization in computer graphics and animation
- establish an intensive care laboratory for nursing students

FIRST UNIVERSITY IN SOUTH/SOUTHEAST TO:

- create a master’s degree in computer engineering
- establish a Ph.D. in cognitive science
- offer a bachelor’s degree in industrial design
- acquire equipment that could manufacture compact discs

FIRST UNIVERSITY IN NATION TO:

- establish a birthing lab, with computerized patient simulators, for nursing students
- offer bachelor’s degree in telecommunications
- appoint a black vice president at (a predominantly white university)
- establish a digital immersive visualization center to be shared by government, private industry and academia
- be designated as an apparel computer integrated manufacturing center
- establish a center to promote bilingualism

NORTH AMERICA:

- to offer a Ph.D. in Francophone studies



ette's daily newspaper and former sports information director at UL Lafayette, wrote a commentary published Sept. 12, 2007, that supported Authement's decision to remain in Division 1-A in football.

McDonald noted that UL Lafayette's baseball, softball, basketball, track and golf teams have been successful in conference and post-season play.

He also observed that UL Lafayette's athletic budget is much smaller than most other Division 1-A athletics budgets "but it is still significantly higher than the state's I-AA membership. And it's no secret that the more money a program has, the more successful it can be. Those funds have helped and continue to help in UL's complete program."

#### ENDOWMENTS

A review of UL Lafayette's financial progress after Authement became president in 1974 shows a gradual increase in private donations. The amounts of financial contributions grew, also.

But the university's financial status was vulnerable to the fluctuations of state funding. Authement repeatedly had to pare USL's budget when state revenues were cut. So, he decided to establish a stable revenue source that could supplement state monies.

By the early 1980s, USL had accumulated about \$500,000 it could invest. Authement asked the late Alfred Lamson, a successful Lafayette oilman, to help raise another \$500,000. The combined total of \$1 million would be invested; only the earned interest would be used by the university.

Lamson would only agree to raise funds if the goal was raised to \$10 million. Within four years, that total had been obtained.

In 1986, UL Lafayette got a huge break when citizens approved the creation of a permanent trust fund with \$505 million in offshore oil royalties and future offshore revenues. Half the interest generated by the fund was earmarked for higher education. Interest from those endowed state funds was used to attract large private donations. A \$600,000 gift from a private donor for instance, would be matched with



*Dr. Ray Authement planted oaks in University Research Park on Jan. 1, 2006, to close a year-long Centennial Celebration.*

\$400,000, in state money to establish a \$1 million endowed chair.

Authement embraced the opportunity. He aggressively sought contributions for endowments. UL Lafayette launched the *Investing in Our Future* campaign in 1997. Its goal was to raise the university's endowments to \$75 million. Today, UL Lafayette has more than \$130 million in endowed funds.

#### CARNEGIE FOUNDATION DESIGNATION

What do Clemson, Baylor, Auburn and UL Lafayette have in common?

They are all universities with high research activity, according to the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

Universities want to share categories with other top universities because there's value in name-dropping. It's all about image, all about others' perception.

Dr. Bradd Clark, dean of UL Lafayette's College of Sciences, likens it to the university's name change in 1999. Before then,

UL Lafayette was capable of competing with major institutions in the country. But, a regional sounding name – the University of Southwestern Louisiana – set the wrong tone. The current name better reflects the school's stature as an institution worthy of national and international attention.

Clark noted that UL Lafayette competes with institutions of significance around the country and is a nationally recognized university.

"When the Carnegie Foundation listed us with other well-recognized institutions, and said we're at that level, it's another example of bringing reality and perception of reality together for us," he said.

#### ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION

Due to a decline in world oil and natural gas markets, the Hub City's economy started spiraling downward in the mid-1980s, taking the rest of Louisiana's oil-dependent economy with it.

Under Authement's leadership, the university became a leader in efforts to diversify both economies. Over the next several years, he created a tasty alphabet soup of 17 research centers. MEPOL, the Manufacturing Extension Partnership of

Louisiana. A-CIM for apparel manufacturing. MSTC for marine survival training. Also established: the Small Business Development Center.

"It's amazing because Dr. Authement did all this during the worst economic times in the century. It was even worse than during the Depression, when half the campus was built by various governmental

programs," said Dr. Joseph Savoie, commissioner of higher education, in an article published in *Louisiana Business* in 2000. ■



## Two Louisiana Universities Have Longest-serving Presidents

Passion for his work and keeping focused on priorities are two keys to Dr. Ray Authement's success and longevity as president of UL Lafayette.

That's the assessment of Dr. Norman Francis, president of Xavier University in New Orleans.

Francis is the longest-serving president of a private university in the United States. He has been Xavier's president for 40 years.

Authement is the longest-serving president of a public university in the nation. In late April, Authement announced he will retire after 33 years as UL Lafayette's top leader.

According to a survey conducted by the American Council on Education, the average tenure for a university president in 2006 was 8.5 years. That's up from an average of 6.6 years in 2001.

Francis and Authement are friends, as well as colleagues, who enjoy mutual respect.

Francis will deliver the keynote address at UL Lafayette's Commencement in December, when Authement will be honored. He will also receive an honorary doctorate in educational leadership from UL Lafayette during that ceremony.

"Dr. Authement is passionate about his commitment to educating young people in Louisiana and, particularly, in Acadiana and Lafayette. He gives his total talents, every day," Francis said. "He gives that willingly. That commitment inspires others at the university to work as hard as he does."

"The key is that he has kept his attention and his focus on the core elements – students first and faculty, or what we call the first among equals, meaning that it's both students and faculty."

"He never forgot that the institution was founded to serve students and he always had with him really committed faculty and staff to serve that core mission."

"That is the secret, not only to longevity but the secret to making sure the university has the quality to serve students. And he's done it well. Lafayette, the region and Louisiana have been lucky to have had him for all these years."



Dr. Norman Francis

Francis grew up in Lafayette, down the street from UL Lafayette, which was known then as Southwestern Louisiana Institute. SLI – like every other public university in the Deep South – prohibited black students from attending then.

During UL Lafayette's Commencement in December 2004, Authement spoke about that period of history. He recalled a conversation with Francis a few years ago.

"He told me over dinner one day, 'Ray, it was very, very hard to ride my bicycle through that campus when I was a teenager and to know that I could not enroll because of the color of my skin. I was denied an opportunity to attend my home university just a few blocks from my father's barbershop and our family home.'"

Authement enrolled at SLI in 1947. In 1954, four years after Authement graduated with a bachelor's degree in physics, SLI became one of the first all-white public universities in the South to integrate.

By then, Francis had earned a bachelor's degree from Xavier University, the only historically black Catholic University in the nation, and was about to become the first black graduate of Loyola University New Orleans College of Law.

At age 36, Francis became the first

lay president of Xavier University – and its first male president – in April 1968.

Xavier now has about 2,500 students in its College of the Arts, 590 in its College of Pharmacy and 200 in its Graduate School.

According to the *Chronicle for Higher Education*, Xavier "sends more minority students to medical schools and graduates more minority pharmacists than any other university in the country." It has also produced one of every four black pharmacists in the United States since 1957.

Authement was named president of UL Lafayette, then called the University of Southwestern Louisiana, in 1974, after serving a year as its interim president. Today, UL Lafayette is the second largest university in the state, with more than 16,000 students.

By the mid-1980s, USL had about \$500,000 to invest. Now, it has more than \$150 million in gifted and pledged assets.

One of Francis' biggest trials as president occurred when Hurricane Katrina slammed into south Louisiana in 2005. A breach in the protective levees around New Orleans inundated the Xavier campus with seven feet of water that sat for three weeks.

In the storm's wake, Francis had to lay off more than a third of the school's staff and faculty and deal with more than \$35 million in damage to its campus. He also lost everything in his family home.

Nonetheless, Francis agreed to serve as chairman of the Louisiana Recovery Authority, a reconstruction advisory board, when asked by Gov. Kathleen Babineaux Blanco.

Norman and Authement were honored earlier this year during the 69th annual Conference of Louisiana Colleges and Universities.

In December 2006, Francis was awarded the Medal of Freedom by President George W. Bush. He has been an adviser to several U.S. presidents.

President Ronald Reagan appointed Francis to a national commission that released "A Nation at Risk" in 1983. It was a landmark call for education reform. ■



# 107 Years, Five Leaders

## RETIRED CITY JUDGE SHARES MEMORIES OF FORMER PRESIDENTS

When a presidential search committee asked for the public's opinion about the qualities UL Lafayette's next leader should have, it got a rare perspective from one man.

Retired Lafayette City Judge Kaliste J. Saloom Jr. has known all five university presidents. He also served as parliamentarian for the panel which ultimately recommended Dr. Ray Authement to become UL Lafayette's fifth president in the 1970s.

Saloom asked committee members to select someone who will continue to improve the entire state by continuing to improve the university.

In an interview with *La Louisiane* a few weeks later, he provided his views on the university's presidents.

Authement, Saloom said, showed strong leadership skills while serving as vice president in Dr. Clyde Rougeou's administration.

When Rougeou took a one-year leave of absence in 1973, Authement became acting president. In 1974, he was named Rougeou's successor.

Saloom credits Authement with increasing the amount of national and international recognition UL Lafayette has received in several different areas. He noted Authement's success in recruiting and keeping top-notch teachers and researchers. The university's president has "a broader vision and he created a confidence in the faculty. He's always sought to keep a high level of faculty," he said.

Here's a brief look at UL Lafayette's first four presidents, along with Saloom's observations about them.

Dr. Edwin L. Stephens became the first president of Southwestern Louisiana Industrial Institute, at age 27, on Jan. 3, 1900. The school had no campus, no faculty and no students.



Dr. Edwin L. Stephens



Retired Lafayette City Judge Kaliste J. Saloom Jr.

DOUG DUGAS

So he literally began to build it from the ground up. In January 1901, Stephens planted oak tree seedlings on campus. Many flourished; a few remain today and are known as the Century Oaks.

When SLII began offering classes, it was a vocational educational institution. By the time Saloom was born in 1918, much progress had been made. The "Main Building," DeClouet Hall and Foster Hall had been built. Baseball, football and track teams had been formed and Stephens had formed an alumni associa-

tion. *The Vermilion* student newspaper and *L'Acadien* yearbook had been established.

Saloom said he grew up "in the shadows of the university." When he enrolled in 1935, the street in front of the school was known as "Industrial Avenue;" decades later, it would be renamed University Avenue.

Southwestern had become a four-year college in 1925 and had dropped "Industrial" from its name. By 1932, it was accredited as a College of Teacher Education, with degrees ranging from art to biology to physical education.

Saloom described Stephens as "an academic leader. He believed in a well-rounded education and liberal arts. He

encouraged people to go to college. He was known for encouraging students to excel in education and to do well academically."

According to the retired city judge, one of the keys to Stephens' success was his selection of faculty members. "Dr. Stephens was instrumental in getting some excellent teachers who stayed with the school for many, many years," he said. One of them was Stephens' wife, Beverly Randolph Stephens, who taught drawing and gymnastics.

Saloom recalled that Stephens was an avid photographer who used his camera to document much of the first four decades of campus life.

As an SLI student, Saloom was a sportswriter for *The Vermilion*.

Stephens would also organize events for students. "On freshman day, we'd have what we called the freshman parade. The male freshmen usually sheared their hair, and they wore skull caps," Saloom said. They would parade from their dormitories, down Jefferson Street and then back to campus.

Stephens retired as president in May 1938 and died in New Orleans less than seven months later.

Lether Edward Frazar succeeded Stephens in 1938. Although he served only two and a half years, Frazar supervised the construction of many campus buildings, such as the president's house, Mouton Hall, Broussard Hall, Burke Hall, Hamilton Hall, Earl K. Long Gym and Stephens Memorial Library.

Saloom said Frazar also helped the campus grow through the purchase of additional land, primarily the former Whittington Estate.

Frazar, who was 34 years old when he became the school's second president, developed the Colleges of Agriculture and Engineering and added the Departments of Music, Commerce and Publicity.

Saloom said Frazar "believed in modernizing the college and bringing in faculty that would expand the college."

The second president also created the campus marching band and the school's first



Lether Edward Frazar

intercollegiate athletic program.

According to Saloom, Frazar organized the effort to get a railroad company to take students to out-of-town football games on trains, so the team would have fans "on the road."

Saloom finished his college studies during Frazar's term.

Frazar resigned from SLI in 1940. He went on to serve as a state representative, dean of McNeese State College and as lieutenant governor during the Earl K. Long administration. He died May 15, 1960.

The university's third president, Dr. Joel Lafayette Fletcher Jr., was known for his personal interest in students' welfare.

Any student who was planning to resign from SLI was required to first talk with Fletcher so the president could determine whether anything could be done to enable him or her to stay in school.

As dean of the College of Agriculture, he had taken advantage of the National Youth Administration and the Works Projects Administration to provide jobs for poor students who needed money to attend SLI. Some of those students grew vegetables on the school's farm. Others worked in campus offices. Many worked in the dairy, where they helped make cheese and butter.

"The dairy farm made some of the best cheese in the world. From time to time, they would distribute it in the community," Saloom said. Fletcher would also have barbecues at Whittington

Hall and invite members of the community to attend.

"President Fletcher served in difficult times during World War II," said Saloom. "He had the campus all out for supporting our air force, our army, our navy. And he did a lot after the war to bring the veterans back to finish their education."

During Fletcher's presidency, F. G.



Dr. Joel Lafayette Fletcher Jr.

Mouton Hall, Montgomery Hall, Madison Hall, Angelle Hall, Olivier Hall, Griffin Hall and Coronna Hall were built.

Saloom served as Alumni Association president from 1958-59.

In 1960, SLI earned university status, which enabled it to change its name to the University of Southwestern Louisiana.

Fletcher retired in 1965 after 25 years of service. He died April 25, 1972.

Dr. Clyde L. Rougeou began teaching at SLI during Stephens's presidency. He was also head of the Department of Animal Husbandry before being named the institution's fourth president.

From 1966 to 1974, Rougeou guided the university through a critical period of rapid growth and curtailed budgets. During his term, enrollment rose from 8,400 to more than 12,000 – a 43 percent increase.

To accommodate the larger student population, Rougeou coordinated \$34 million in construction projects. Maxim Doucet Hall, Wharton Hall, the Student Union, Cajun Field, the Athletic Complex and the two upper floors of Dupré Library were constructed during his presidency.

The university also expanded academically, as it added graduate programs in English, history, microbiology, mathematics, statistics, computer science and education. In 1968, USL began granting doctoral degrees.

"He saw that the university would have to move to more liberal arts teaching than agriculture or the applied sciences," Saloom said.

Although Rougeou was a "very quiet president," according to Saloom, he kept "a high profile for the school."

Near the end of his presidency, Rougeou asked Saloom to serve as parliamentarian for the selection committee that would recommend his successor.

When Rougeou took a year-long leave of absence in 1973, Authement became acting president of USL. Rougeou died in 1980. ■



Dr. Clyde Lee Rougeou



Authement Set the Bar
Cajuns compete at top level of NCAA collegiate competition

IF THERE WERE AN MVP AWARD FOR Ragin' Cajun athletics, President Ray Authement would be the top candidate this year. Here's why:
• In September, he accepted the largest single sponsorship in the history of UL Lafayette's athletic program – a 10-year

pledge totalling \$2 million in cash and in-kind-services from Cox Communication.
• Also in September, the \$4 million Leon Moncla Indoor Practice Facility opened near Cajun Field. UL Lafayette is only the second university in Louisiana to provide its student-athletes with a weatherproof place to prepare for games.



UL Lafayette President Ray Authement is shown in the Leon Moncla Indoor Practice Facility, which opened this fall. It will be used by Ragin' Cajun football, baseball, basketball and softball teams.

• This summer, Authement helped initiate a funding plan that, when approved by the state Board of Regents, raised the amount of state monies public universities can earmark for athletics. The net result: UL Lafayette's budget for athletics increased \$1.4 million for this fiscal year.

Oh, what a difference 34 years can make.

When Authement was promoted from vice president to acting president of USL (now UL Lafayette) in 1973, he faced the unenviable task of defending the university against the NCAA's charges of 125 basketball recruiting violations. The school ultimately received the NCAA's Death Penalty, which shut down the men's basketball program for two years and put other Ragin' Cajun sports on hold.

Also in 1973, the Ragin' Cajun football team had the worst season in USL's history. Ten games. Ten losses.

Authement was undaunted. The NCAA created three divisions for collegiate competition in 1973 – Divisions I, II and III. In 1974, he chose to join the top tier. "We wanted to send a clear message, that UL Lafayette intended to compete at the highest level of athletics, just as it does in academics," he recalled in an interview for the Spring 2002 issue of La Louisiane. "We haven't looked back."

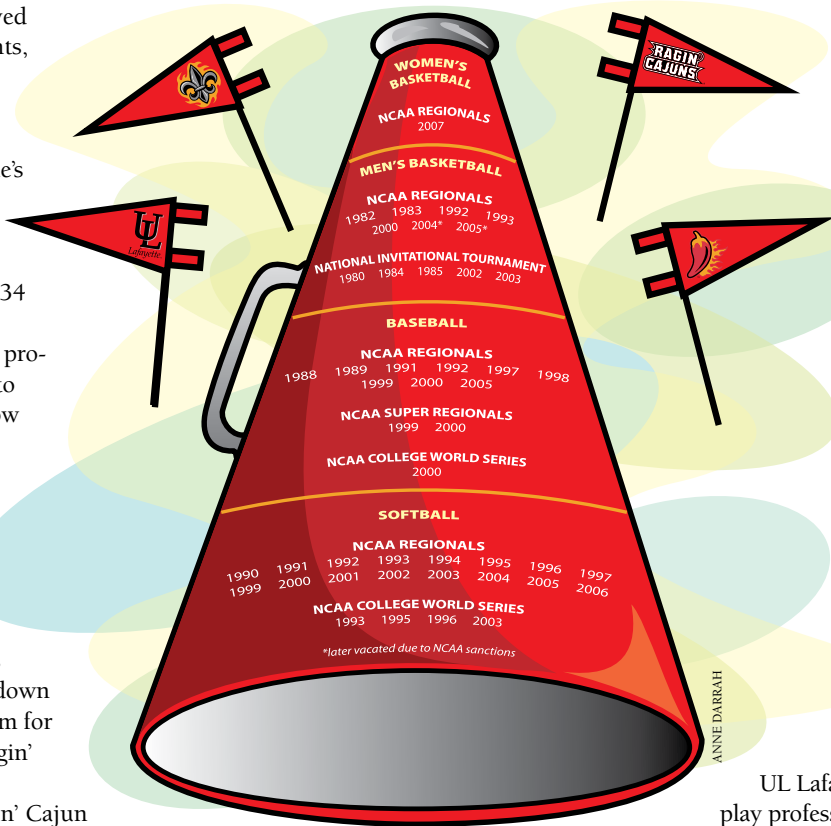
And when the NCAA subdivided its collegiate divisions for football in 1978, Authement again chose the most competitive level, Division 1-A.

Former UL Lafayette Athletic Director Nelson Schexnayder said Authement's decision reinforced the university's ambitious goals. "UL Lafayette, Tulane and LSU were the ones who made the decision to be in 1-A from the start. No one else (in Louisiana.) Some other universities have joined since. So, he made a wonderful decision."

A look at Ragin' Cajuns' success during Authement's tenure confirms that assessment.

Take baseball, for example. In late September, Rivals.com released its pre-fall rankings. The Ragin' Cajuns are in its Top

POSTSEASON APPEARANCES BY TEAM, 1974-PRESENT



25 teams in the nation. Last season, UL Lafayette had a 45-17 season and won the Sun Belt Conference regular-season title. The Cajuns made it to the SBC Tournament and to the final round of the NCAA Tournament's College Station Regional.

In 2000, the Ragin' Cajuns took their first trip to the College World Series and placed third.

The Ragin' Cajun softball team is consistently one of the best in the country. It went to the Women's College World Series in 1993, 1995, 1996 and 2003. It has had 35 All-Americans, including co-head coach Stefni Whitton Lotief.

UL Lafayette's men's basketball team has competed in the NCAA Tournament seven times and in the National Invitational Tournament five times.

Without question, the pinnacle of Ragin' Cajun football success was the 29-22 defeat of the Texas A&M Aggies at Cajun Field on Sept. 14, 1996. The Cajuns earned that victory in front of the largest crowd in UL Lafayette's history, 38,783. It was the first time that a Ragin' Cajun football team had defeated a nationally ranked team.

Jake Delhomme of Breaux Bridge, La., was captain of USL's team that year. He went on to become quarterback of the Carolina Panthers and led that team to the Super Bowl in 2003. He's one of a long list of top drawer

UL Lafayette players who went on to play professional football, such as Brandon Stokley, Charles Tillman, Orlando Thomas, and Brian Mitchell.

Authement's support of Ragin' Cajun student-athletes started long before he became president in 1974. "USL athletes returning from road trips have become accustomed to finding Dr. Authement there to greet them. As vice president of Southwestern, he recognizes the place of athletics within the university framework as a rallying point for students, alumni and interested citizens of the community," the late Mario Mamalak, USL's director of publications, wrote in a press release in the early '70s. Sports fans



Garland Williams and Dr. Ray Authement, then-vice president of USL, confer during a game in Blackham Coliseum.



## 1974-79

- 74** USL joins NCAA Division I for all sports
- 76** Cajun track complex built
- 77** NCAA reinstates USL's good standing
- 78** USL classified as Division I-A for football  
Wrestling dropped as an intercollegiate sport  
Roll On campaign raises more than \$200,000
- 79** M.L. "Tigue" Moore Field built

## 1980-89



- 82** Trampoline team disbands
- 85** Final men's basketball game in Blackham Coliseum
- 86** Cajundome opens
- 88** Hollis Conway earns silver medal in Olympics

## 1990-99

- 92** Hollis Conway wins bronze medal in Olympics
- 93** Softball team plays in collegiate World Series for first time in school history
- 94** Softball team ranks No. 2 in nation, the highest ranking of any sport in USL history
- 96** USL defeats No. 25 Texas A&M – first defeat of nationally ranked team – before largest crowd in school's history, 38,783  
Ragin' Cajuns® becomes nationally registered trademark
- 99** Culotta Tennis Center built  
Ragin' Cajuns® athletic logo introduced



## 2000-Present

- 00** Baseball team plays in Collegiate World Series for the first time in school history, ties for third place
- 00** Women's soccer program added
- 01** Cayenne chosen as new spirit leader
- 06** UL Lafayette student-athletes have highest graduation rate of any NCAA Division 1 school in Louisiana  
Soccer/track complex opens
- 07** Women's basketball team competes in first NCAA Division 1 regional tournament in UL Lafayette women's program's history  
Leon Moncla Indoor Practice Facility opens  
Cox Communication's \$2 million pledge is largest single sponsorship in Athletic Department's history  
Lourdes Park added at M.L. "Tigue" Moore Field

who have spotted Authement at Ragin' Cajun basketball games in the Cajun-dome might have noticed him routinely leave his seat when a few minutes were left on the time clock. He would walk to the side of the court, where he would offer a handshake or pat on the back to players as they headed to the locker room – win or lose.

"He likes to know the athletes by name, likes to talk with them, wants to know how they are doing in school," Schexnayder said. Many stay in touch with the university president after they leave UL Lafayette.

For the record, about 49 percent of Ragin' Cajun student-athletes had a 3.0 or better grade point average for the Spring 2007 semester.

First-time freshmen student-athletes are required to attend sessions that offer time management tips, study techniques and information about campus resources. Danny Cottonham, director of UL Lafayette's Student-Athlete Academic Center, stresses that the goal is graduation.

"After our student athletes finish their athletic careers, we want them all to have the academic experience to not only finish their degree, but to make a

meaningful contribution to society with what they have learned," he said.

UL Lafayette's athletics program got a boost in 1999, when a new athletic logo – featuring a pepper on fire – was unveiled. Ragin' Cajuns® was already one of the most popular nicknames in collegiate sports. Adding the pepper spiced up the university's brand and helped boost sales of UL Lafayette merchandise.

Over the past decade, public support of Ragin' Cajun athletics has increased, too. In the past five years, for instance:

- more than \$1 million has been generated for building improvements and unrestricted funds;
- about \$250,000 has been raised for football recruiting;
- about \$400,000 of recurring revenue has been generated by naming opportunities, such as signs; and
- about \$1 million in "in kind" gifts or discounted services has been donated or provided to improve athletic facilities.

That money has been crucial in light of restrictions on how much state funding can be allocated for a university's athletics program.

For fiscal year 2006-07, UL Lafayette's athletics budget was about \$7.8 million. About \$3.1 million of that total was state revenue. The Board of Regents' decision earlier this year to allow universities to put more state funds into their athletics programs took UL Lafayette's athletics budget to a little more than \$9 million.

"This is a significant step in helping to put our athletic program on an even field with other Division I programs. These changes will give us the ability to provide the resources our programs need to be competitive," said David Walker, who was named the university's athletic director in July. He had served as interim director since Schexnayder resigned in 2005.

"I am still amazed at what Dr. Authement and Nelson Schexnayder were able to accomplish with the restrictions placed on them by the old policy. As I have become familiar with other athletic programs around the country, I have come to appreciate how very fortunate we are to have a president, a supporter and a fan like Dr. Authement," Walker said. ■

## 'DOC' DESERVES A ROUND OF APPLAUSE • BY DAN MCDONALD

*(Dan McDonald is a sportswriter for The Advertiser, Lafayette's daily newspaper. He was sports information director for UL Lafayette from 1982-1999. This commentary was published May 1, 2007.)*

Everyone involved in the UL athletic program owes school president Ray Authement a huge debt of gratitude.

So do most of the teams in the Sun Belt Conference. Without him, it's very possible that a lot of current league members might still be floating around looking for a home. At the very least, they'd be mired in a conference that's not on the level that the Sun Belt currently enjoys.

Authement was part of the delegation from the old American South Conference that made trips to places like South Alabama and Western Kentucky nearly two decades ago. It was his task to persuade those and other schools – schools left behind when original Sun Belt members UAB, Charlotte, South Florida and others bolted for Conference USA – to join with the American South programs.

It took some convincing. But now, the Sun Belt is playing Division I-A football, is part of the NCAA's management hierarchy and the BCS, and is established as a league respected nationally in several sports.

Authement should be proud of his role in league history. But, like his many other accomplishments in almost 34 years as UL's top man, they're rarely celebrated. He's not the type to brag about what he's done, preferring instead to play up the accolades of the university as a whole.

Accolades which, by the way, would be far less if he hadn't shepherded the school through some tough times. It will be tough to find another such shepherd, with Authement surprising nearly everyone on Friday with a retirement announcement.

"He's the role model president in Louisiana," said interim athletic director David Walker, a part of the university administration for many years before his recent involvement with athletics. "He's kept us financially stable, put us on track in the right technology fields, and grown this university into a very well-respected research institution.

"At the same time, he's taken care of all the auxiliary areas, including athletics."

Throughout his career, Authement has taken more than his share of heat



On Jan. 27, 1994, the Ragin' Cajun basketball team defeated Arkansas. President Ray Authement is flanked by his wife, Barbara, left, and eldest daughter, Kathy Prouet.

from Ragin' Cajun fans for what many perceived as a lack of support – mostly financial – for the athletic program. Those critics, though, didn't know the whole story.

They didn't know of his work behind the scenes to help the school's sports programs or how he squeezed every cent possible in the direction of Reinhardt Drive.

They didn't see him out on the field at football practice, or quietly in attendance at too many athletic events to count. It's not many presidents that would spend lunch hours at their school's athletic complex, touching bases and keeping tabs on the goings-on.

"I know he's the reason I'm here," said UL football coach Rickey Bustle. "Since I've been here, he's been a great influence for me, and I appreciate everything he's done for us. I'm excited for him and I'm proud for him."

Authement actually pre-dates Bustle in football, playing single-wing tailback at Terrebonne High in the 1940's. He also played baseball and basketball, although he says he wasn't very good at the latter, and his love for athletics never waned after that.

He knows more student-athletes than most, and he revels in their successes on the field and in their later lives. No one ever took Cajun losses harder. And no one enjoyed the wins more.

He's probably his own worst critic. Like most of us, he probably feels he hasn't done enough. That's why he's already said that one of his final tasks with the school will be to raise funds to solidify the athletic program's financial future.

The department appreciates the help, Doc, but the people in athletics know you've already done a lot more than your share. And for those who disagree, to quote a former New Orleans Saints coach – You don't know ... and you never will. ■

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## Double Honor

Authements receive prestigious alumni awards

**W**HEN DR. RAY AUTHEMENT WAS honored with the UL Lafayette Alumni Association's Outstanding Alumni Award in late October, he expressed his appreciation, then deflected the attention.

Like a polite guest who takes a hostess gift to a dinner party, Authement offered some announcements about UL Lafayette's most recent success.

He just learned that its Mathematics Department was ranked by the National Science Foundation as one of the top 100 university math departments in the country.

And, pay raises awarded this fall mean that UL Lafayette's faculty are earning the

average salary paid by universities in 16 states who are members of the Southern Regional Education Board. With the pay hikes, UL Lafayette faculty are in the same salary league as universities such as Georgia Tech and Baylor, Authement reported.

The NSF also ranked UL Lafayette's Computer Science Department in the top 60 university computer science departments in the nation. Authement said that recognition was especially rewarding because the university began developing its renowned computer science program years ago, when the school's budget was tight.

"But now we have money. We have money thanks to you, thanks to the UL Lafayette Foundation and thanks to the governor and legislature. This has been the best year ever in the history of the university. . .

"I thank you so very much for this honor and I don't really deserve it. You do, because you have done so much for the university," he told Alumni Association members.

Authement also thanked his wife, Barbara. "What a magnificent partner and lady who has helped me in so many crises," he said.

The Alumni Association paid tribute to Barbara Authement, too, by surprising her with its Honorary Alumni Award. It is presented to individuals who are not UL Lafayette alumni but deserve recognition for their "loyalty, service and support of the university," said Alumni Association President Martin Audiffred. The award has been presented only three times in the past 15 years.

Barbara Authement thanked the Association. "It has been a wonderful journey and all of you have made it possible," she said.



Dr. Ray Authement congratulates his wife, Barbara, who received the Alumni Association's Honorary Alumni Award.



Ken Ardoin

In April, Authement announced his intention to retire. His successor is expected to be chosen by the University of Louisiana System in December.

Dr. Steve Landry, vice president of Academic Affairs at UL Lafayette, gave an update on the university, which he said "is incredibly healthy in almost every academic way, every support way. . . It has been Dr. Authement's mantra for the past 15 years to insure raises for the faculty because it's his mantra that academics comes first. . . "

Ken Ardoin, executive director of University Advancement, noted that Authement has affected the lives of thousands of people. He described the university president as caring, sacrificing and unselfish. "Probably the biggest compo-



A brick bearing the university president's name is near Moody Hall. He graduated from Southwestern Louisiana Institute in 1950.

ment of all, he has a big heart."

Ardoin was president of the UL Lafayette Alumni Association from 1987 to 1988. He worked closely with Authement to create the Walk of Honor, a path on campus made of bricks bearing the names of all graduates of the university.

Authement received a bachelor's degree in physics from Southwestern Louisiana Institute in 1950 and went on to earn master's and doctoral degrees in mathematics. He taught at McNeese State University in Lake Charles, La., and Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge, La., before joining the SLI faculty in 1957.

Among his accomplishments as president are the following.

- USL changed its named to the University of Louisiana at Lafayette.
- Academic admission standards were implemented.
- The university's endowments rose from about \$500,000 to more than \$120 million.

UL Lafayette has been recognized by the Carnegie Foundation as a "research university with high research activity," which placed it in the same research category as Baylor and Auburn.

- Louisiana's Ragin Cajuns® compete in NCAA Division I, the highest level of collegiate competition.
- University Research Park was established and developed.
- More than 30 buildings and facilities were constructed; more than 25 others were renovated or expanded.

Authement kept the university sound fiscally, despite repeated budget cuts when the Oil Boom went bust in south Louisiana in the 1980s. At the same time, he contributed to the diversification of the oil-dependent local and state economies by establishing 17 research centers and assisting area businesses.

Since 2000, he supervised a \$130 million building boom on campus that included construction

of Legacy Park, an apartment-style student residence; the Paul and Lulu Hilliard University Art Museum; the Advanced Computer Technology and Research Hall; and the Louisiana Immersive Technologies Center in University Research Park.

Dan Hare, executive director of the UL Lafayette Alumni Association, said Authement and the Association have a symbiotic relationship.

"Dr. Authement has always started each year off by welcoming the Alumni Association president during a private meet-



The Alumni Association nominating committee voted unanimously to honor Dr. Ray Authement and Barbara Authement.

ing that I attend as well. They each have a chance to share their goals for the year and Dr. Authement gives an update on the university's perspective. They also discuss any objectives that he would like the Association to assist with," he said.

For more Alumni Association news, go to [www.louisianaalumni.org](http://www.louisianaalumni.org) ■

### Would you like to send your best wishes to Dr. Ray Authement?

He announced in April that he plans to retire after serving as the university's president since 1974. That makes him the longest-serving president of any public university in the United States.

You can send a letter or card to this address:

**ATTN: RETIREMENT COMMITTEE  
PUBLIC RELATIONS AND NEWS SERVICES  
UL LAFAYETTE  
P. O. BOX 41009  
LAFAYETTE, LA 70504**

Or, you can email a message to him at [prns@louisiana.edu](mailto:prns@louisiana.edu)



## President's Legacy

Authement pledges, 'When I go, we'll be in good shape.'

**T**HE UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA AT Lafayette had about half a million dollars to invest when Dr. Ray Authement became its president in 1974.

Today, the University of Louisiana Lafayette Foundation has over \$150 million in gifted and pledged assets, which includes over \$122 million in endowments. Through endowments, the university has established perpetual sources of funding, because the principle is invested and left untouched. Only a portion of the earned interest is spent.

Such substantial financial growth was accomplished through the efforts of many people over the past three decades. But Authement, a shrewd money manager, was

the mastermind. His long-term strategy was expressed in the name of the fundraising campaign conducted in conjunction with UL Lafayette's Centennial Celebration in 2000: *Investing in Our Future*.

After serving as the university's president for 33 years, Authement will retire within the next few months. As he predicted in an article published in *The Times of Acadiana* in July 2005, "When I go, we'll be in good shape."

Authement, as university president, is a voting member of the board of trustees of the UL Lafayette Foundation, which is responsible for governance and oversight of endowment management and investment of funds donated to the Foundation on

behalf of the university. "He has been an asset to our governing board, helping us move forward. He has been a visionary with our management of endowments, and with determining what the best needs for the university are," said Julie Bolton Falgout, the Foundation's executive director.

But Authement's relationship with the Foundation is broader than tracking its portfolio. The Paul and Lulu Hilliard University Art Museum is an example of a joint project. Lead donor Paul Hilliard, the board and Authement saw a need for a university art museum and worked together to achieve it, Falgout said.

"It was through this generosity of Paul and Lulu Hilliard that we were able to even consider such an expansive project. It has been a tremendous asset to the university," she continued.

The university provided a site on campus for the Foundation's office building, which opened in 2000. "We have a long-term lease. We built the building through a generous donation by Chantal and Forrest K. Dowty," Falgout said.

Authement was also instrumental in establishing a joint operating agreement between the Foundation and UL Lafayette, which serves as the management agreement for the private 501c3 organization with its public institution counterpart.

"As a nonprofit entity of the university, it behooves you to have those types of agreements in place," Falgout said. "That was done a number of years ago, before most people even realized that it was considered best practice."

UL Lafayette's Development Office was established in 1991. John T. Landry, director of development, said Authement stressed from the start that its focus would be on endowments. "A lot of universities scramble for operating funds, so basically they're focusing on keeping the doors open. His focus is long-term," Landry said, adding that the permanency of an endowment is compelling to donors.

When the *Investing in Our Future* campaign began in 1997, UL Lafayette's gifted assets totaled about \$45 million. The campaign pitch was based, in large part, on Authement's fiscal responsibility. A booklet given to prospective donors states:

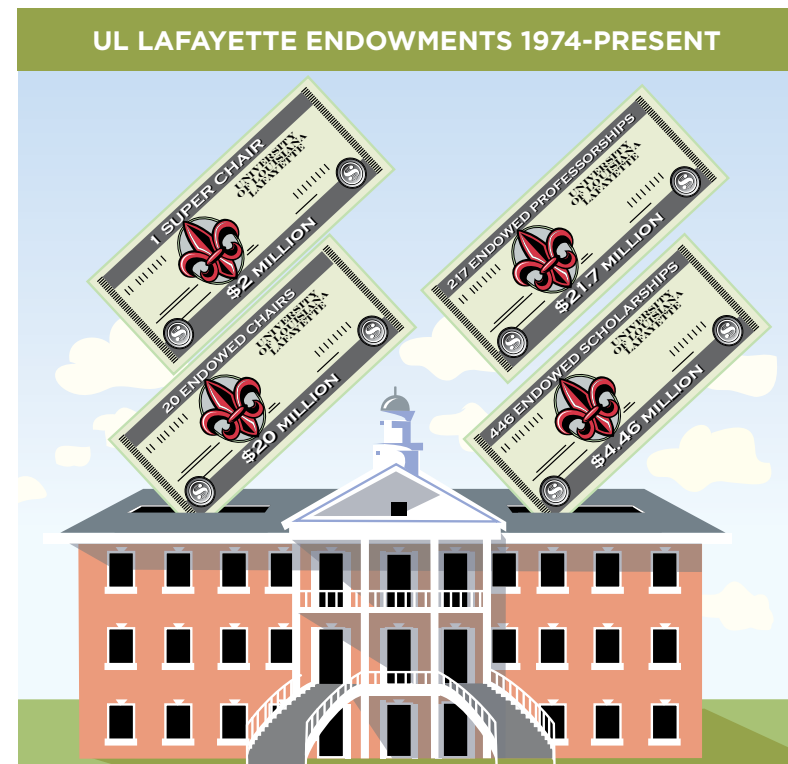
"USL has succeeded because it has always strived to be more than it is, setting its goals higher and higher, fueled by a determined spirit. It has advanced steadily, using limited resources wisely for the maximum benefit. If USL can do so much with so little, what can it do with more? Through support for the *Investing in Our Future* campaign, the answer is clear: anything it puts its mind to."

The original goal was to increase the sum of gifted assets to \$75 million. But by the time the campaign concluded, the total had reached \$100 million.

"That's a testament to the generosity of our public, which includes alums and non-alums. We've had gifts come from people who did not graduate from here, but who realize the importance of the university to the region," Landry said.

There were three co-chairs of the *Investing in Our Future* campaign: Matt Stuller, chairman and chief executive of-

ficer of Stuller Inc.; Clay Allen, an attorney, Allen and Gooch; and Bill Fenstermaker, chairman and chief executive officer of C. H. Fenstermaker & Associates Inc. Honorary co-chairs were Herbert Abdalla, the late Herbert Heymann, former U.S. Sen. J. Bennett Johnston and the late Alfred Lamson. They, in turn, worked with other community leaders to solicit contributions.



supplement faculty salaries.

UL Lafayette has one super chair and twice as many \$1 million endowed chairs – 20 – as any other school in the University of Louisiana System. Louisiana Tech in Ruston has 10, the University of Louisiana at Monroe has seven and Nicholls State University in Thibodaux has six.

UL Lafayette has almost twice as many \$100,000 endowed professorships – 217 – as any other institution in the UL System. Louisiana Tech in Ruston ranks second, with 126. McNeese University in Lake Charles is third, with 68.

The Foundation manages 446 endowed scholarships, 47 endowed faculty development funds, 226 non-endowed scholarships and 26 non-endowed faculty development funds. Although these are not matched with state monies, they are invested with the Foundation's portfolio and have returned earnings to the accounts each year to help them grow.

Falgout said having such a large sum of endowments and program funds is advantageous because "you can diversify your portfolio quite a bit more to achieve

a greater rate of return. With our growing endowment, we've had the ability to do that. We have some very astute investment managers and board members who have a clear understanding of investment management that allows us to achieve a high rate of return. At the end of the 2007 fiscal year the Foundation's investment portfolio averaged over an 18 percent return. The portfolio is well diversified with an asset allocation blend of 69 percent equities (stocks) and 31 percent fixed income (bonds), which continues to sustain the Foundation's primary investment objective of prudent growth of capital, through conserving principal and enhancing capital appreciations."

For more information about the Foundation, send an e-mail to [juliefalgout@louisiana.edu](mailto:juliefalgout@louisiana.edu) or call (337) 482-0700. To contribute to UL Lafayette, send e-mail to [gift@louisiana.edu](mailto:gift@louisiana.edu) or call the Office of Development at (337) 482-0922. ■



Co-chairs of the *Investing in Our Future* campaign – Matt Stuller, Bill Fenstermaker and Clay Allen – created a \$1 million endowed chair in computational mathematics in honor of UL Lafayette President Dr. Ray Authement. Authement received a kiss from his wife, Barbara, when the chair was announced in October 1997. Seated, from left, are Julie Authement Johnson and the late Kathy Authement Prouet.





In May 2008, Dr. Ray Authement will present his grandson, Phillip Prouet, with a bachelor's degree from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. They are shown here in the late 1980s in front of Martin Hall.

“THE UNIVERSITY IS AN INSTRUMENT,  
A TOOL ONE CAN USE TO OPEN THE DOOR  
OF SUCCESS AND OPPORTUNITY.”

DR. RAY AUTHEMENT, JAN. 21, 1966





# What's your sign?



Academy Sports and Outdoors  
4232 Ambassador Caffery

Albertson's  
2678 Johnston Street  
2863 & 4400 Ambassador Caffery  
1818 NE Evangeline Thruway

Bell's Sporting Goods  
4313 Johnston Street

Follett's—The Book Store  
210 E. St. Mary Boulevard  
[www.efollett.com](http://www.efollett.com)

Golfballs.com Inc.  
126 Arnould Blvd.  
[www.Golfballs.com](http://www.Golfballs.com)

LIDS  
Acadiana Mall / 5725 Johnston Street  
[www.LIDS.com](http://www.LIDS.com)

Louisiana Hot Stuff  
4409 Ambassador Caffery

Pieces of Eight  
902 Coolidge Boulevard  
Sports Avenue  
Acadiana Mall



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505 Jefferson Street

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1229 NW Evangeline Thruway

Women's and Children's  
Hospital Gift Shop  
4600 Ambassador Caffery

[www.RagincajunGEAR.com](http://www.RagincajunGEAR.com)



# Make a Pass Get Down Come See

**Translation:** Drop by for a visit. In Cajun country,  
we'll make you feel right at home - whether you prefer  
to dance at a festival or catch a sunset over the cypress trees.  
With Zydeco rhythms, Cajun & Creole flavors,  
Louisiana scenery and Southern hospitality  
you'll agree – there's no place like **Lafayette.**



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