

International Developments

When representatives of Southeastern and the Inter-American Development Bank signed a cooperative agreement following spring commencement ceremonies, the event capped a successful year toward the university's goal of building global alliances.

The agreement with IDB—the oldest multinational development institution representing 46 nations—is intended to promote and expand cooperative activities between IDB member countries and Southeastern in the areas of social, economic, technological, educational and cultural development.

In signing the agreement, Southeastern President Sally Clausen called it a “first step” in the establishment of the Center for Global and International Affairs at the university.

“We are dedicated to creating new opportunities—for our students as well as international students—to learn from each other,” she said. “We want to develop an international nucleus with partners across all our disciplines. This is a very important element of education and service, and with cooperation from the IDB and others, we will develop a university that is truly global in scope.”

IDB President Enrique V. Iglesias—who served as commencement speaker and received an honorary Doctor of Humanities Degree from Southeastern—called the partnership an important instrument in helping to develop a knowledge base that is vital for the economic and social development of Latin America and the Caribbean. The region, he said, is one of the youngest in the world, with approximately half the population (500 million) under the age of 34.

“It is very important that the IDB be involved in education and in helping our young people develop,” Iglesias said. “Educa-

tion is the basis of everything. When we speak about the poverty of the region—which is still very, very high—when we speak about the inequalities that still exist among the haves and the have-nots, then we realize that the only way to break the vicious circle of poverty is through education and through partnerships such as this.”

Southeastern's relationship with the IDB started in March, when the institution held its annual meeting in New Orleans, only the second time the IDB had met in the United States. The university co-sponsored a Youth Summit on the campus, in which more than 60 young people from Latin America, the Caribbean, Canada and Asia visited South-



Members of the IDB Youth Summit pose for a group shot after spending a day at Southeastern to learn how American higher education helps develop future leaders.

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Established in 1959, the IDB was formed to help accelerate the economic and social development of Latin America and the Caribbean. The IDB currently finances projects representing a total investment of \$240 billion. The university is continuing its dialogue with the IDB to fully develop the program.

Other international agreements

Southeastern is also entering into an agreement with the Ministry of Education and

Culture of Spain to create the Spanish Language and Cultural Studies Center at the university. The center will be dedicated to the study, teaching and dissemination of Spanish language and culture among faculty, students and the general public.

During the past year, Southeastern entered into several other agreements, all designed to enhance partnerships with other nations and international organizations. These included:

- A formal agreement with Costa Rica to help promote and expand international academic and research programs of mutual interest.

- A General Cooperation Agreement with Dr. Cesar Gaviria, Secretary General of the Organization of American States. The agreement

will foster the development of projects that promote “culture, development, cultural diversity, dissemination and protection of cultural heritage, human resource training, the encouragement of creativity and the development of cultural tourism.”

- An Agreement of Cooperation with the Union of Latin American Universities and the HispanoAmerican Association of Research Centers and

Telecommunications Companies to encourage the development of projects that promote culture, science, information technology and telecommunications, and distance learning.

International visitors

In keeping with Clausen's efforts to expose Southeastern students to the world around them, the university hosted several other international visitors, including:

- René Préval, president of Haiti, spoke at Southeastern in September. The first president of a nation to visit the university, Préval focused on his country's efforts to solve the