

Appropriations Committee: Higher Education

Name of Testifier: Prof. Corinne E. Blackmer, SCSU, Dept. of English and Judaic Studies

Subject: How Our State Universities Matter and Provide Access

I have taught at Southern for 29 years and while I have innumerable examples, I'd like to pick out two examples of how the accessible, one-on-one, and scholarly education we provide at Southern not only but also enhances and *saves* lives.

I had an immigrant student who excels in math and who knows five languages fluently. Enrolled in my class, she was thrown out of her home when her parents accidentally discovered she was a member of the LGBT community. I was able to give her the devoted time required, in addition to resources from Southern, and now she is happily married to a woman, and works as an accountant and doing translation in our courthouses. *A life saved by quality state university education!*

I had another student the following semester with three children who had dropped out of school and lacked the skills to improve her career prospects. With an extensive but also very liberal understanding of the Bible and the time I was able to devote to help her with second language issues around her writing, she excelled in my class, got child care, and went on to receive a scholarship and become a public health care worker. *Another life saved by quality state university education!*