

JELF, Oglethorpe Share Drive to Make Difference

Oglethorpe President Larry Schall will serve as keynote speaker at the Jewish Educational Loan Fund's 142nd annual meeting and year-end celebration.

BY [SARAH MOOSAZADEH](#) November 20, 2017, 5:05 pm



Higher education leads to successful citizens, says Oglethorpe University President Larry Schall, who will serve as the guest speaker at JELF's 142nd annual meeting and year-end celebration.

Although Schall's involvement with JELF began a year ago, he believes that the same principles apply to the organization and to his university's mission to provide quality education to students who might not have the necessary resources.

"It always ends up being the last \$2,000 or \$3,000 that keeps students out of school or, once they start, forces them to leave, but our program, which JELF supports, helps provide the last few dollars

to ensure a student can be successful, whether they go to [Emory](#), Oglethorpe or a community college,” Schall said.

“Larry has helped transform Oglethorpe University’s campus, its culture, and is on an upward trajectory similar to JELF,” JELF Director of Development Josh Schaier said. “We are all about innovation and empowering students at JELF, which is something Larry implements in everything he does.”

As president the past 13 years, Schall has expanded the university’s presence abroad, increased the number of applicants, stabilized the finances and reinvented the campus.

“When I first came to Oglethorpe, I got the sense that the institution was not as active a citizen in our community,” he said. So Schall, who is Jewish, helped establish the Center for Civil Engagement at Oglethorpe, which encourages students to work on issues related to hunger, poverty and health in the community.

He also started a strategic initiative to grow the number of undergraduates. The student body has increased by 50 percent, sparking the construction of residence halls and a campus center, as well as a center for science and innovation with donations from the Cousins family.

Oglethorpe also has launched five campuses abroad — in London, Barcelona, Rome, Athens and Cape Town — serving about 500 students from 60 universities.

“We’ve been internationalizing and globalizing our campus, both in terms of sending students abroad but also attracting international students to Atlanta,” Schall said.

The university is scheduled to break ground on a new business school opening in the fall of 2019, thanks to a \$50 million donation from an alumnus, the largest gift toward education in Georgia.

Oglethorpe was the original host for [Limmud](#) when it launched in Atlanta early in Schall’s tenure, and the university president gained an understanding of economic disruption and its relation to higher education by driving [Uber](#) for one month.

“The most interesting way to learn about the business was to be in the front seat, not the back,” he said. “It was a unique experience to see who used Uber and felt like a combination of psychological counseling between the passenger and driver.” Schall earned a couple of hundred dollars, which he donated to the university.

He’ll speak about disruption in higher education at the JELF annual meeting.

“I still think college done the right way does train people to be both contributing members of their community and financially successful,” he said. “Oglethorpe’s motto is ‘make a life, make a living, make a difference,’ and I think that captures what we try to do.”

JELF's annual meeting also will include the installation of the organization's new board president, Stan Lowenstein, who replaces Marianne Garber, as well as new board members Brian Banner, Greg Gaylis, Richard Jacobson, David Ransenberg, Emily Sauerteig, Adon Solomon and Gil Wolchock.

Who: Oglethorpe University President Larry Schall

What: JELF 142nd annual meeting

Where: Westin Atlanta Perimeter North, 7 Concourse Parkway, Sandy Springs

When: 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 5

Cost: Free; RSVP by Nov. 29 at jelf.org/event or 770-396-3080