

GRIFFIN ELECTED FOUNDATION PRESIDENT

G. Lee Griffin, Louisiana National Bank president and chief executive officer, last fall was elected president of the LSU Foundation. Jeff H. Benhard, president of Benhard Grain, Inc., a grain exporting firm in Palmetto, was named president-elect.

Griffin replaced Henry Goodrich, president of Goodrich Oil Co. in Shreveport as president.

Elected or re-elected to the foundation's board of directors were Virginia Carmouche, Lake Charles; Charles P. Siess Jr., Houston, Texas; Hugh H. Kelly, New Orleans; David Hentschel, Tulsa, Okla.; Sidney Reso, Morristown, N.J.; Griffin Jones, Dallas, Texas; Michael G. Miller, Baton Rouge; and Herman A. Engel, Tyler, Texas.



SCHEXNAYDER FUND DONATION—Botany Graduate Student Organization representative Elizabeth Harris presents checks totaling \$229 to Charlie Roberts, right, vice chancellor for university relations and development, for the Charles A. Schexnayder Fund. Schexnayder, who

served as chairman of the botany department from 1970 to 1982, is currently assistant director of the International Programs for the LSU Agricultural Center. At left is Charles L. Salomon, LSU Foundation director of development.

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The new LSU Foundation professor thinks the center will be one of the world's most important headquarters for the study of French culture

Edouard Glissant's thirst for knowledge took him from a small village school in Martinique to some of the oldest and most respected universities in Europe.

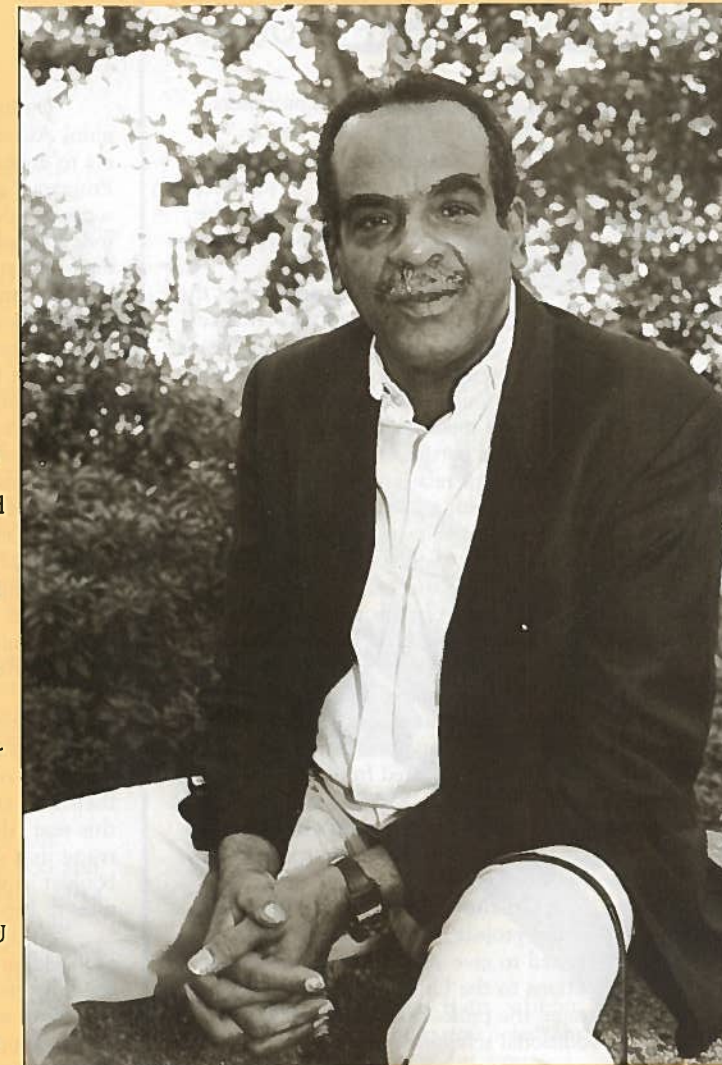
Along the way, he earned advanced degrees in philosophy, ethnology, and literature and built a distinguished international career as a writer, critic, and scholar.

Now, his intellectual wanderings have brought him to Baton Rouge, where he has been named director of LSU's Center for French and Francophone Studies.

According to Glissant, who also holds the title of LSU Foundation Distinguished Professor of French, "The center can become one of the most important headquarters for the study of French culture in the world. That's what we want to do, and I think we can do it."

Glissant has three major goals in mind for the center. He hopes to focus on the way of life of New World plantations to determine how African and European cultures, particularly languages, affected one another in South America, the Caribbean, and the United States. His second goal is to develop interdisciplinary approaches on how European languages have developed and changed in areas outside Europe.

And, finally, he wants to



build intellectual relationships between LSU and universities in French-speaking countries in Africa, the Caribbean, Europe, and Canada.

"One of the most interesting questions I want to study is why French is the only European language to develop a strong and widespread Creole form in the New World.

"When a young boy from Martinique went to school twenty years ago, he spoke Creole but not French. We learned French as a foreign language.

writers in Africa, the Caribbean, and Canada have attracted considerable critical attention for the vitality and strength of the works they are producing. The word Franco-phone refers to all French writers and literatures in areas outside France, such as Louisiana, Morocco, or Martinique.

"Unlike the Medieval period, there are no new languages beginning today, but there are beginnings of new ways of using language. For example, the French-speaking West Indians from Martinique and Guadeloupe have a special way of using French which is not the Frenchman's way of speaking and writing.

I'm very interested in how the French language today is becoming a new kind of French language, not a variant, not a dialect, but a new kind of literary language," said Glissant.

Born in Martinique in 1928, Glissant holds, among other degrees, the prestigious state doctorate from the Sorbonne in Paris. He has published five novels, including the *Le Lezarde* which received the Renaudot Prize, and *Le Quatrième siecle* which was awarded the Charles Veillon Prize. He has also had a play produced in Paris and has published eight volumes of poetry.

At LSU, he is teaching a seminar in *La poetique de la relation* in which he traces the line from such 19th century French writers as Rimbaud and Baudelaire directly to contemporary writing in French outside France.

Until recently, Glissant was professor of literature at the University of Paris, editor of the *Courier of UNESCO*, and director of periodical publications of UNESCO in Paris. He founded the Institute for the Studies of Martinique in his home country and served as its director from 1965-1979.

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