“Key to the success ... is attracting an outstanding student body, providing a high-quality educational experience and growing enrollment in areas that support economic development.”
In mid-2012, Clemson announced that the University’s generous donors had exceeded our initial capital campaign goal of $6 million by raising $608,839,594. Through these gifts, Clemson was able to advance every priority area, including granting 357 scholarships and fellowships to deserving students and creating impact programs such as the Glenn Department of Civil Engineering and the Thomas F. Chapman Leadership Scholars Program.

But, the need continues. And a new goal was set — a bigger goal, a goal that reflects the potential of the University and the generosity of our donors.

$1,000,000,000

The number is big. It’s the largest goal ever for a public university with an alumni base our size. It is bold. It is visionary. And it is right for Clemson.

Enhance student quality and performance

You hear it every day. Students are amassing debt at an astonishing rate. States are slashing funding to their universities. Universities are cutting vital programs, while business and industry are demanding more highly skilled workers.

More and more, Clemson finds itself struggling to meet the needs of current and potential students while continuing to advance the quality of the educational experience and bolster the state’s economic development.

The Will to Lead has provided vital scholarship support, but the need continues to grow:

- State support now provides only 11 percent of Clemson’s annual operating budget.
- The percentage of funding cuts for higher education in South Carolina’s 2012-13 budget is the highest in the nation.
- Adjusted for inflation, the state’s academic funding of the University is approximately 68 percent lower than it was in 1973.
- Cuts continue to threaten Pell Grants while the number of Clemson students receiving need-based grants has risen by 18 percent in the past five years.
- In 2012-13, the average cost of attendance at Clemson per year is $27,486 for in-state students and $44,414 for out-of-state students.
- The average financial need of incoming freshmen is up 25 percent since 2005 ($19,974 vs. $13,725).
- Federal student loan borrowing is up 47 percent in the last five years.
- On average, students must cover 51 percent of their financial need through loans.

As public funds dry up, the competition heats up

As a result of unmet financial needs, Clemson is in a tough competition for exceptional students. Topranked schools offer top scholarship packages to attract the best students. But Clemson lags behind.

Of the schools in our region in the top of the U.S. News & World Report rankings, Clemson ranks next to last. We fall behind North Carolina State, Georgia Tech, Auburn, and the universities of Georgia, Alabama, Florida, Virginia and South Carolina.

Scholarships make the difference

As a result of the scholarship disparity, Clemson has seen in recent years a steady decline in the yield* for both in-state and out-of-state incoming freshmen in the top 10 percent of their high school classes. However, recent increases in aid to incoming freshmen produced an immediate increase in yield, demonstrating the swift effect of scholarship offers on top students making their college decisions.

Additionally, college costs and the debt load on recent graduates continue to rise. Scholarships for both in-state and out-of-state students are crucially important.

To fund a portion of the scholarship needs of current and incoming Clemson students over the next four years, our fundraising goal is $100 million.

Greatness comes only with great goals

Students are the heart of Clemson, and every building, every program, every class is built around ensuring their success. For Clemson to remain competitive, we must provide our students the support they need during their university years and in the workforce.

Your gift to the Will to Lead for Clemson will help provide that support.

$1,000,000,000. It is a goal never before achieved by a public university with an alumni base our size. It’s important. It’s bold. It’s audacious. And it is just the kind of goal Clemson loves.

Go Tigers!

* Yield is defined as students who are accepted and then actually enroll at Clemson.