

# 2023-24 ANNUAL REPORT

*Making an Impact: The No. 1 Student Experience*



Division of  
**STUDENT AFFAIRS**



# CLEMSON UNIVERSITY VALUES



## **INTEGRITY**

Be honest, trustworthy, responsible and ethical.



## **RESPECT**

Value the rights of others, their individual differences, beliefs and ideas. Actively listen and communicate. Seek to understand the challenges they face and be tolerant and forgiving.



## **DIVERSITY**

Attract and retain students, faculty and staff with diverse backgrounds who come together as one inclusive Clemson Family.



## **PATRIOTISM**

Honor our military heritage and our commitment to duty, service, leadership, tradition and civic responsibility.



## **EXCELLENCE**

Exceed expectations and continuously improve. Be creative and take appropriate risks. Learn from failure. Best is the standard.



## **SELF-RELIANCE**

Work hard, exercise self-discipline, be results-oriented and dare to do the right thing, even when it is difficult or unpopular.



## ELEVATING THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Student Affairs stakeholders,

It was a remarkable year at Clemson! In the Division of Student Affairs, it was a year distinguished by growth, achievement and unwavering commitment to our values of integrity, respect, diversity, patriotism, excellence and self-reliance.

We successfully launched a new strategic plan, driven by four strategic priorities: well-being, engaged learning, access and belonging, and staff experience. These priorities have guided our work and provided our team with a framework for delivering the very best experience for our students, staff and the extended campus community.

Below are just a few examples of our accomplishments from FY24, through the lens of these priorities:

### WELL-BEING

- Completed construction of the Johnson Family Student Memorial and Reflection Garden, a place of reflection adjacent to Samuel J. Cadden Chapel
- Collaborated on key safety initiatives, including the proactive installation of emergency opioid overdose reversal kits across main campus

### ENGAGED LEARNING

- Revitalized the student experience through the inaugural Clemson Music Fest, the first live music experience held on campus in over a decade
- Expanded recreational and intramural sport opportunities for students through the opening of the Davidson and Reed family fields

### ACCESS AND BELONGING

- Secured the first-ever Cornerstone Gift of \$2.5 million from the Gossett Family to benefit widespread programs and initiatives designed for all students
- Achieved Top 10 Military Friendly® designation for the first time, displaying Clemson's continued commitment to veterans and military-connected students

### STAFF EXPERIENCE

- Developed a framework of educational division-wide meetings designed to increase institutional knowledge among staff
- Strengthened belonging through reimagined division branding, clearly mapping back to Clemson Elevate, the university's strategic plan

Throughout this report, you will find many other key actions and tangible examples of how the division incorporated these strategic priorities as we position students and staff for success.

As I reflect on my five years as vice president and dean of students, I am incredibly proud of what we accomplished collectively. It has truly been an honor and a privilege to serve this great institution, and I look forward to what's ahead for Clemson and Student Affairs.

Go Tigers!



A handwritten signature in orange ink that reads "L. Christopher Miller".

**L. Christopher Miller, J.D., Ph.D.**  
*Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students*



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>This is Student Affairs</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>Student Affairs at a Glance</b> .....	<b>4</b>
 <b>Strategic Priority One: Well-Being</b> .....	<b>6</b>
Student Spotlight: Luke Hall	7
Students Changing Lives	8
Making a Difference: Interfraternity Council	9
Building a Healthy Community	10
Inspiring Fellow Students	11
 <b>Strategic Priority Two: Engaged Learning</b> .....	<b>12</b>
Student Spotlight: Addison Langston	13
Clemson Music Fest	14
Creating Tomorrow's Leaders	16
The No. 1 Student Experience	17
Welcoming Tigers Home	18
Training Leaders: Pershing Rifles	19
 <b>Strategic Priority Three: Access and Belonging</b> .....	<b>20</b>
Student Spotlight: Mia Sumera	21
Kicking Off a New Year	22
A Welcoming Environment for All	23
Support Beyond the Student	24
Breaking Barriers and Thriving	25
Serving Those Who Served	26
 <b>Strategic Priority Four: Staff Experience</b> .....	<b>28</b>
Initiative Spotlight: Paw Pantry	29
Creating a Culture of CARE	30
Q&A with Student Affairs Staff	31
Chris Cox's CU Grow Experience	32
The Impact of Philanthropy	33
Supporting Student Affairs	34
<b>A Message of Thanks</b> .....	<b>36</b>





# THIS IS STUDENT AFFAIRS

## VISION AND MISSION

Student Affairs will deliver the preeminent student experience.

Our mission is to promote holistic development in inclusive, supportive environments that empower students to thrive.

## CLEMSON ELEVATE ALIGNMENT

Student Affairs has closely aligned the division's foundational statements, priorities, goals and objectives with the University's strategic plan, Clemson Elevate. Student Affairs inspires curiosity of learning, leadership development, diversity of thought, personal growth and well-being in support of the No. 1 student experience — one of the three pillars outlined in Clemson Elevate. Student Affairs serves as a strategic partner and ensures every student has the best opportunity to excel, graduate with a world-class education and is empowered and positioned for success beyond their time at Clemson.



**Clemson Elevate**

## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



### Well-Being

We embed holistic well-being throughout Student Affairs to support students having the knowledge, skills and confidence to invest in their lifelong health.



### Engaged Learning

We create intentional co-curricular and experiential education opportunities focused on purposeful and reflective learning to facilitate student growth and development.



### Access and Belonging

We create a community that encourages diversity of thought, embraces differences, commits to the pursuit of lifelong learning, and removes barriers to access and success.



### Staff Experience

We develop a results-oriented organizational culture by investing in professional growth, clarity of vision and positive relationships.

**22,875**

UNDERGRADUATE  
STUDENT ENROLLMENT

**5,872**

GRADUATE STUDENT  
ENROLLMENT

**28,747**

TOTAL ENROLLMENT  
REPRESENTING 96 COUNTRIES



# STUDENT AFFAIRS AT A GLANCE

Collecting, analyzing and reporting data demonstrates the division's commitment to data-informed decision making related to the continuous improvement of its programs, services and administrative functions.



## WELL-BEING

**35,960**

Total medical provider and therapy visits at Student Health Services

**18,918**

Total unique participants at Swann and Douthit Hills fitness centers  
(a 6.8% increase from FY23)

**91.6%**

Students enrolled in Tiger Accountability felt they were properly informed and understood their referral to the program  
(an educational program for low-level violations of the Student Code of Conduct)



## ENGAGED LEARNING

**38,991**

Total student contacts with Center for Career and Professional Development, including 16,709 one-on-one counseling and employer contacts

**20,291**

Total students involved in at least one of our 519 student organizations

**16,127**

Total student attendance at Fraternity and Sorority Life and council-led programs and events

## UNIVERSITY BRAGS

### *The Princeton Review's Best 389 Colleges 2024:*

- #5, Town-Gown Relations are Great
- #7, Best Career Services
- #11, Students Love Their School Teams
- #12, Friendliest Students
- #15, Everyone Plays Intramural Sports

### *TIME Magazine:*

- Best Colleges for Future Leaders

### *Wall Street Journal:*

- Top 25, Public Institutions
- Best University in South Carolina

## STUDENT DIVISION AWARDS

*Almeda R. Jacks Outstanding Undergraduate Student Award*  
**Jackson Grant and John Shoemaker**

*R.C. Edwards Outstanding Graduate Student Award*  
**Mandy Vitale**

*Walter T. Cox Graduate Student Award*  
**Luke Hall**

*Rising Star Award*  
**Rylie DeWeese**

*Matt Locke Leadership Award*  
**Elizabeth Caldwell**

*Frank A. Burtner Scholarship*  
**Kellan Fenegan and Gino Vitelli**



## ACCESS AND BELONGING

**\$1,456,616**

Raised by fraternities and sororities for philanthropy

**6,337**

Total events and reservations processed and coordinated by Campus Reservations and Events

**93.3%**

of students who completed a patient satisfaction survey reported an ease of scheduling an appointment with Student Health Services that met their needs



## STAFF EXPERIENCE

**7,923**

University employees completed an optional well-being training championed by the Division of Student Affairs

**2,651**

Trainings in Tiger Training completed by Student Affairs staff

**10**

Division-wide team building meetings and events for all Student Affairs staff to increase collaboration and competencies

## STAFF DIVISION AWARDS

### *2023 Staff of the Year*

- **Makayla Stark** — Advocacy and Success: Well-Being
- **Kristi Cox** — Campus Reservations and Events: Engaged Learning
- **Casey Ford** (co-recipient) — Center for Student Leadership and Engagement: Inclusive Excellence
- **Mikayla Morris** (co-recipient) — Center for Student Leadership and Engagement: Inclusive Excellence
- **Kris Adams** — Office of Community and Ethical Standards: Staff Experience

### *2023 Team of the Year*

**Campus Recreation Programs and Assessment**

### *2023 Student Affairs Partnership Award*

**Office of Institutional Excellence**

## ADDITIONAL STAFF AWARDS

### *2024 Veteran Champion of the Year in Higher Education*

**Kimberly Poole** — Assistant Vice President and Senior Associate Dean of Students

### *2024 Algernon Sydney Sullivan Non-Student Award*

**Julie Biggers** — Center for Career and Professional Development

### *Spring 2024 Veteran Impact Award*

**Lauren Parker** — Interpersonal Violence Response

### *2024 Chi Sigma Alpha Outstanding Professional Award*

**Kate Radford** — Center for Student Leadership and Engagement

### *2024 American College Personnel Association Outstanding New Professional Award*

**Julie Townley** — Advocacy and Success





## STRATEGIC PRIORITY ONE WELL-BEING

### *Holistic Development*

#### POWER OF THE PAW

Clemson sent out Power of the Paw, a quick pulse survey, to all students during the Fall and Spring semesters.

**87%**

*strongly agreed, agreed or somewhat agreed they are successfully able to access available on-campus tools and services to support their health and well-being*

N=6,042

### *Lifelong Investment*

**86%**

*strongly agreed, agreed or somewhat agreed they are aware of the tools and services available on campus to support their health and well-being*

N=6,043

**78%**

*describe their overall well-being as excellent, very good or good*

N=6,029

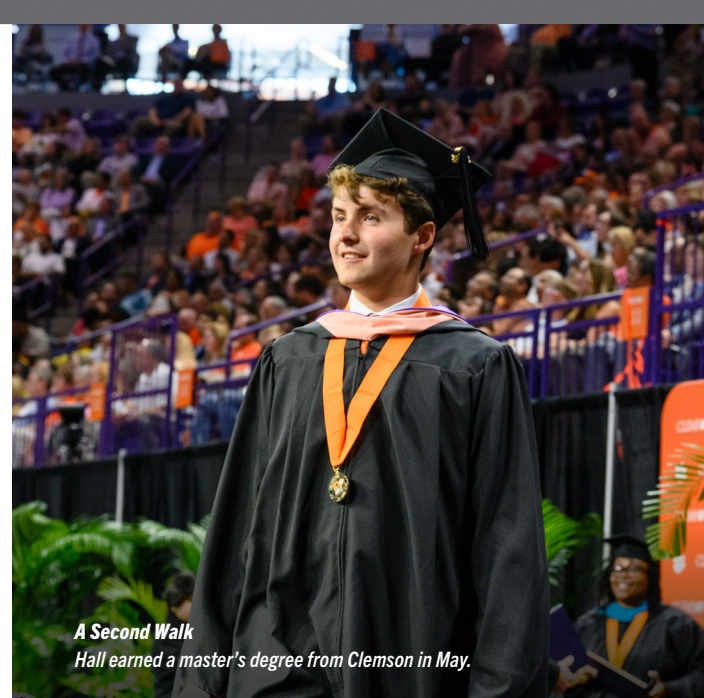


# STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: LUKE HALL



## Servant Leadership

Hall, right, was instrumental in coordinating the return of the volunteer program for Move-In to ensure a seamless transition to Clemson for students and families.



## A Second Walk

Hall earned a master's degree from Clemson in May.

## BUILDING COMMUNITY WITH CLEMSON'S NEWEST STUDENTS

Luke Hall is the epitome of what it means to be involved as a Clemson student. With each of his engagements, he's prioritized well-being, not only for himself but also for others.



## Award Winner

Hall, pictured with President Jim Clements, earned the 2024 Walter T. Cox Graduate Student Award.

Hall graduated with a psychology degree in May 2023. As an undergraduate, he was a member of Beta Upsilon Chi and was inducted into Order of Omega — the top five percent of leaders in the Fraternity and Sorority Life community. He served in Clemson Undergraduate Student Government, was a University tour guide and also a career ambassador in the Michelin Career Center.

After enrolling in graduate school and securing an assistantship with the public health sciences department, Hall continued his focus on the well-being of fellow students by chairing the Health and Human Services Committee of Graduate Student Government. In his role, he advocated for the promotion of physical and mental health resources to the graduate student body.

This past year, he was the driving force behind an effort to restore the Move-In volunteer program — an element of the student experience that was phased out during modified university operations in 2020. He worked with residential staff to recruit student organization leaders to welcome new students and families and help unload vehicles in August, creating sense of community during the critical transition to Clemson. Hall earned his master's degree in May and is pursuing a doctorate from Dartmouth University in New Hampshire.

“

We wanted to bring the idea of volunteering back to welcome students, especially those in their first year. Assisting at Move-In offers us a way to give back and never forget what those transitions are like.

— Luke Hall, student

”



# STUDENTS CHANGING LIVES



## Courage Under Fire

Joseph Pope and Charles Segars, middle (L-R), rescued students from a burning vehicle last fall and were honored by law enforcement for their bravery.

## TWO STUDENTS HONORED FOR LIFE-SAVING ACTIONS

Joseph H. Pope and Charles Segars III received acclaim from both Clemson University Police Department and Clemson City Police for selfless and heroic actions in saving the lives of two fellow students.

During the early morning hours of Sept. 2, a severe motor vehicle collision occurred in the area of Old Stone Church Road and Cherry Road in the City of Clemson. Pope and Segars, bystanders at the scene, rushed to assess the situation and discovered multiple individuals were still trapped inside the burning vehicle. Undeterred by the fire, the two acted decisively, breaking the driver's side window to extract the driver before breaking the passenger's side window to rescue the second occupant. Thanks to their quick thinking, remarkable bravery and disregard for their safety during these critical moments, Pope and Segars undoubtedly contributed to saving the lives of fellow students.

*"We broke out the passenger window and had to pry the door open because it was the point of impact," says Pope, a junior from Columbia, South Carolina. "Charles found a pulse, and right then, police arrived on scene. I'm really glad we were able to keep people from harm's way."*

Pope was later honored by the Boy Scouts of America when he was presented the Honor Medal with Crossed Palms, a distinction that has been bestowed on less than 300 individuals among millions of scouts worldwide.



## Winner, Winner

Lindsey Schmidt, left, and Ellie Jansen co-chaired Clemson's Blood Bowl drive for Alpha Phi Omega.

## ALPHA PHI OMEGA SPEARHEADS RECORD BLOOD BOWL DONATIONS

The 39th "Blood Bowl" took place the week of Nov. 13 at both Clemson and South Carolina, a week prior to their matchup on the gridiron. Alpha Phi Omega service fraternity co-chairs Ellie Jansen and Lindsey Schmidt were part of a group of 67 students who helped spearhead Clemson's efforts in soliciting blood donations as part of an annual competition against its archrival.

Bloodmobiles were stationed at 10 different locations on main campus, along with a primary hub in the Hendrix Center ballrooms. Schmidt and Jansen combined to work more than 60 hours over the course of the week. They followed closely through a website tracker as donations arrived in record fashion and reflected a dominating win over the Gamecocks!

*"We beat our record number of donations for a single day on the very first day, and the momentum just continued from there," says Jansen, a senior. "The record-breaking numbers speak to the impact of this event on our campus."*

**4,671**

Blood bowl donations from students, faculty, staff and community members in 2023

**21,000+**

Combined lives impacted by Clemson and South Carolina in 2023 Blood Bowl competition



**Ambassadors for the Student Experience**

The Interfraternity Council executive board helped play a role in a successful 2023 edition of Tigerama.

## MAKING A DIFFERENCE: INTERFRATERNITY COUNCIL

### INTERFRATERNITY COUNCIL ENJOYS BANNER YEAR

John Shoemaker — who served as Clemson’s Interfraternity Council (IFC) president in 2023 — was one of 12 recipients of the 2023 Undergraduate Award of Distinction from the North American Interfraternity Conference. The award recognizes fraternity men who are exemplary leaders of their organizations and serve their brothers, campuses and fraternity/sorority communities with humble confidence.

Shoemaker is a senior political science major from Coronado, California. During his term as president, he helped grow and serve the more than 2,000 members of fraternities at Clemson. He put chapters in the best position to succeed through reimagined officer training, anti-hazing education modules, new member orientation and by strengthening relationships with University administration and staff. He and his executive leadership team also helped advocate for IFC’s longevity at Clemson by infusing an attitude of accountability and enacting positive changes to help drive the No. 1 student experience.



**A Leader of Men**

John Shoemaker served as IFC president in 2023.

Shoemaker’s leadership resulted in not only record-breaking numbers in academics, service and philanthropy, but also national acclaim for the organization.

*“We’ve done a lot of work in Fraternity and Sorority Life at Clemson over the past couple of years and to be recognized for it on a national stage has been a huge honor,”* says Shoemaker, who served as president of Phi Gamma Delta in 2022 before transitioning to the IFC role. *“My experience with IFC and at Clemson overall has been second to none.”*

### FY24 HONORS

*(from the North American Interfraternity Conference)*

#### Outstanding IFC Award

In recognition of councils that excel in operations and positive impact on their chapters, Greek communities and host institutions

#### Outstanding Peer Governance

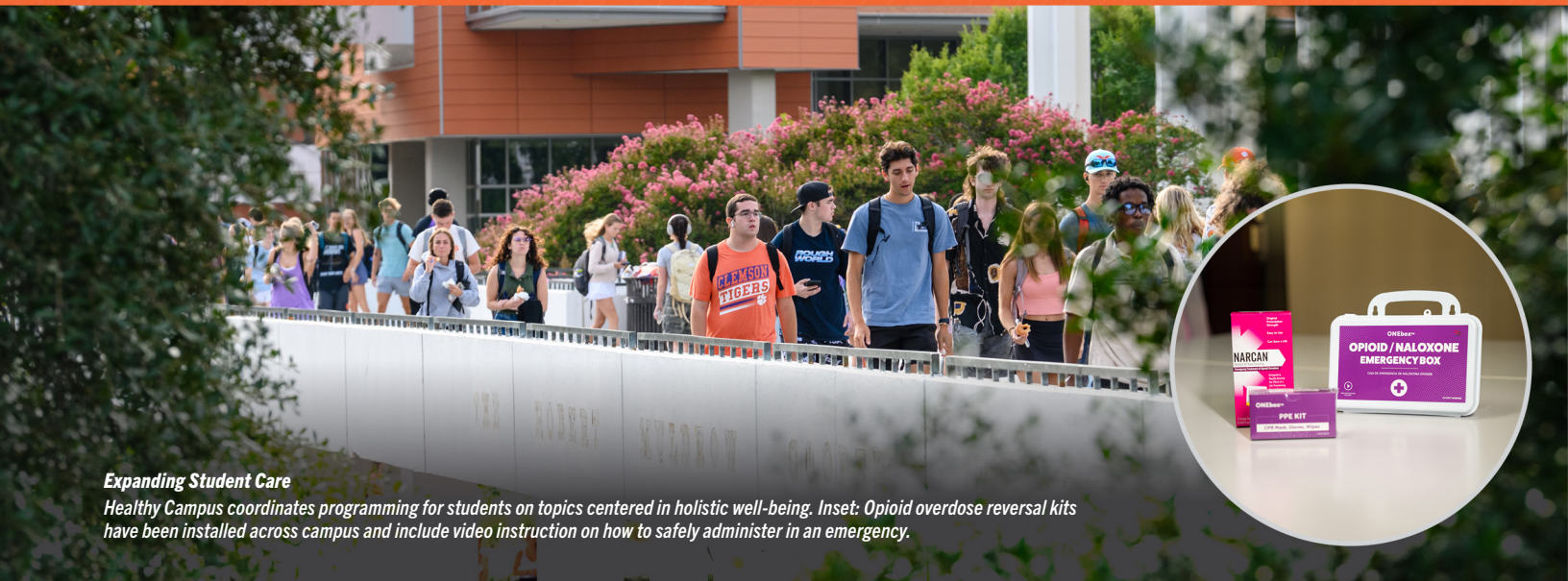
In recognition of commitment to adherence in the standard operating procedure of conduct accountability

### INTERFRATERNITY COUNCIL FY24 AT A GLANCE

- 23 Chapters
- 1,913 Members
- 688 New Members
- 3.263 - Fall 2023 GPA
- 3.288 - Spring 2024 GPA
- 15,218.5 Hours of Community Service
- \$424,685.94 Raised for Chapter Philanthropies



# BUILDING A **HEALTHY** COMMUNITY



## **Expanding Student Care**

Healthy Campus coordinates programming for students on topics centered in holistic well-being. Inset: Opioid overdose reversal kits have been installed across campus and include video instruction on how to safely administer in an emergency.

## **WELL-BEING EDUCATION AND OUTREACH**

As the educational arm of Student Health Services, the Healthy Campus team — led by longtime director Jennifer Goree — strives to be a national model so students can experience a way of life that contributes to lifelong health and well-being through public health advocacy, engaged learning activities and bystander intervention.

Healthy Campus drives a number of important initiatives. Through its renowned Aspire to be Well program, new students are guided through a peer-led educational module that focuses on well-being, mental health, and prevention of substance misuse, suicide and interpersonal violence. It is a requirement among first-year students, along with AlcoholEdu and other programs.

Goree's team also facilitates Tigers Together, a suicide prevention advocacy program, for students, faculty and staff. To date, nearly 800 participants have been trained, including residential community mentors, Fraternity and Sorority Life members and ROTC cadets.

Healthy Campus collaborates with students and campus partners on marketing and outreach as well, including the Marketing and Communications Division on its 'How are you Really' campaign and new Tiger Pause newsletter that launched last fall.

**5,707**

Students participated in Aspire to be Well

**1,158**

Total participants attended well-being educational programs through Healthy Campus

## **OPIOID EMERGENCY KITS INSTALLED ON CAMPUS AS A PROACTIVE MEASURE**

Emergency opioid overdose reversal kits have been installed in more than 20 buildings on main campus. A collaborative effort between Public Safety, Student Health Services, Clemson Rural Health and the South Carolina Department of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Services (DAODAS), ONEbox kits are located in high-traffic areas near trauma kits and include Narcan® and a quick training video on how to respond to an overdose emergency.

Recent studies have highlighted the dangers opioid poisoning presents to institutions of higher education due to the prevalence of counterfeit pills that are easily accessible online and in communities, many of which may be misused by college students to enhance their academic performance and address stress and anxiety. Narcan® (also known by the generic name naloxone) is a life-saving medication that can reverse an overdose or poisoning from opioids.

The Clemson University Police Department, along with Clemson University Fire and EMS, have been carrying Narcan® for several years, and student organizations have partnered with various foundations and non-profits to provide education and distribute Narcan® and fentanyl testing strips on campus. Narcan® is also available for individual students at the Healthy Campus office. Each ONEbox kit includes video instruction on how to properly administer Narcan® in the event of an emergency.



# INSPIRING FELLOW STUDENTS



## Curators of Comfort

Morgan Dailey, left, and Imari Crumity co-led “If You’re Reading This,” an award-winning, letter-writing mental health initiative.

Less than two years later, Dailey teamed up with senior Imari Crumity to coordinate open letters from students, faculty and staff as part of a unique initiative that brings personal stories, resource sharing and an educational focus toward mental health to the Clemson community on both Instagram and LinkedIn.

Through the power of words, both students have followed their passion for enabling personal connection in others through the idea of vulnerability — acknowledging the fact that it’s okay to struggle with mental health.

Over the course of 2023-24, Dailey and Crumity facilitated the posting of 30 open letters to IYRT, mostly from students. Clemson is part of a larger national network of schools — 20 institutions total — with representation in the IYRT initiative. Requests to contribute letters range from direct messages, anonymous nominations or individual outreach. Letters are posted on Wednesdays online and via social media.

“College is a difficult time for many; it’s a lot of new and a lot of transition,” says Crumity. “There are things about your own mental health you don’t understand. We want students to know it’s okay to not be okay, and IYRT provides that sense of vulnerability.”

## STUDENTS CO-LEAD INITIATIVES FOCUSED ON MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Morgan Dailey was a college freshman when she came across a social media post and open letter focused on finding joy. It was written by Clemson Football Coach Dabo Swinney on ifyoureadingthis.org (IYRT), a website aimed at creating a community around mental health advocacy. Dailey remembers it making a meaningful impression.

“I thought it was incredible Clemson got someone so renowned to contribute,” she says. “That had a lot of impact on me.”

## NATIONAL CHAPTER OF THE YEAR

Clemson’s “If You’re Reading This” received the 2023-24 Outstanding Chapter Award for publishing 30 open letters in support of mental health, and inspiring the submissions from authors including a diverse array of students, President Jim Clements, Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students Chris Miller, beloved professors and more.



## Sexual Assault Awareness Month

Yes! Fest 2024 brought together students with University staff members to learn about healthy relationships through engaging activities and resources.





## STRATEGIC PRIORITY TWO

# ENGAGED LEARNING

✓  
*Value-Based Education*

✓  
*Purposeful Experiences*

✓  
*Leadership and Service*

**223**

Total undergraduate students  
employed by Residential Living  
and Residential Learning

**5,699**

Students participated in at least  
one Intramural Sport



# STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: ADDISON LANGSTON



## Community Builder

Addison Langston, a residential community mentor her final three years at Clemson, graduated with a biochemistry degree in May.

## LEADING ON THE RESIDENCE HALL

Addison Langston was a residential community leader in Lever and Mauldin halls this past academic year. In her role, she would often meet with students one-on-one, engaging in educational development and serving as a conduit to campus resources.

These residential community mentors are unique members of the Clemson student community. Described by some as the “backbone” of first-year success, RCMs — formerly resident assistants, or RAs — provide students who live on campus a stable community in which to explore, connect, engage and lead.

During the 2023 Fall semester, Clemson had 7,136 students living in residential communities on main campus. Seventy-seven percent were either traditional first-year students or Bridge to Clemson students. A successful transition to Clemson is critical, and creating a robust residential experience is often the conduit. That’s where student leaders like Langston come into the equation.



## Eager to Learn

Langston meets with a member of the Residential Living staff.

“Freshman year, I really didn’t make many friends,” Langston admits, reflecting on the difficulty of entering college in 2020 during a global pandemic. “After becoming a residential community mentor as a sophomore, I gained a support network at Clemson.”

Langston has done more than pay it forward. As a live-in resident on campus, she built community with students. And she’s not alone, either. Every living space has a full-time staff director, graduate assistants, a residential community leader and multiple RCMs.

“

*My Clemson experience has been full of opportunities to educate myself on a variety of topics, whether it’s academics, interacting with people, how to make friends or how to be a leader. I’ve enjoyed my time here and the friends I’ve been able to make along the way. It’s been especially fun to see residents develop; you feel like a proud mom.*

— Addison Langston, student

”

“As a community director, I knew I would need to rely on returning staff and students to help set up a cohesive and successful team,” says Rachel Garner, who joined Clemson Home as a full-time staff member in 2023. “Addison was a perfect leader who brought a lot of experience and historical background on the community and was willing to take on additional work to help us have the best leadership and a clear direction.”





## BRINGING LIVE MUSIC BACK TO CLEMSON

Planning a two-day music festival that attracted a dozen musical artists and sold thousands of tickets is no small undertaking. But don't tell that to Marty Elliott, a strategic partner who ultimately helped bring Clemson University and the City of Clemson to the table together with an event promoter.



*"The concept of Clemson Music Fest was truly in the works for more than 18 months," she says, noting the event hopes to be a jumping point for the future and an unforgettable experience for everyone in attendance — primarily Clemson students.*

Clemson Music Fest showcased more than 15 hours of live music on the Upper Intramural Field, in the shadows of the north deck of Memorial Stadium. It was the first music festival of any kind at Clemson since Zac Brown Band headlined the Southern Ground Music Festival at the same location in 2011.





“

One of Clemson's Strategic Pillars is to provide the No. 1 student experience. This live two-day entertainment event contributed to this by creating an opportunity for students to create wonderful memories and be part of the beginning of a new Clemson tradition. In addition, students also benefited through experiential learning opportunities with industry experts by actively engaging in internships on creative teams for marketing and promotional plans for the event.

— George Smith, Sr. Associate Vice President for Student Affairs

”

“From the beginning, we intended for this to be a collaborative experience. No other university pulled off what Clemson did. This was the largest music festival on any ACC campus this spring,” says Elliott.

Whether hip-hop or indie rock or pop, Clemson Music Fest satisfied a wide range of musical tastes. The event was headlined by T-Pain, Two Friends, Mt. Joy and The Fray. In all, thousands attended over the two days — making the inaugural CMF a success.

**11,500**

Clemson Music Fest crowd attendance

**15+**

Hours of live music performed

**12**

Student performers and bands

## MERKLE'S MEMORIES — Senior marketing major captures excitement of CMF through camera lens



### Team Player

Brendan Merkle, second from left, was one of several students involved in capturing the sights and sounds of Clemson Music Fest.

Brendan Merkle is appreciative of all the places a camera has taken him.

In April, the senior marketing major added a new niche to his experiential education portfolio through his involvement with Clemson Music Fest. Merkle was responsible for producing photo and video content for the festival's official social media channels leading up to, during and after the two-day event.

“All of my best experiences have come outside of the classroom,” he says. “You can learn all the material in the classroom, but if you don't put it to fruition, it's not as beneficial. Gaining hands-on experience has allowed me to become a better creator and prepared me to transition from college into the workplace.”

Before he crossed the graduation stage in May, he tackled one final assignment, working the entirety of Clemson Music Fest to ensure the biggest moments were properly captured.

From singing to dancing to packed-in sections of students, Merkle says the atmosphere at the inaugural CMF was nothing short of amazing — much like his time as a Clemson student.

“I'm grateful for everyone at the university,” Merkle says. “I've been afforded so many opportunities to thrive. I can't speak highly enough about Clemson and how it's allowed me to grow over my four years here.”



# CREATING TOMORROW'S LEADERS



## Women in Leadership

Hannah Starling, a graduate assistant in Student Affairs, presents during the 2024 Women in Leadership Conference. Clemson was named a “Best College for Future Leaders” by TIME Magazine.

Clemson is known for its commitment to building the next generation of leaders. In November, the university was honored as one of the “Best Colleges for Future Leaders” by TIME Magazine.

Clemson offers students a wide range of leadership and professional development opportunities. Through Student Affairs, new students are introduced to the Clemson Leader Framework as part of the Orientation process each academic year. The Center for Student Leadership and Engagement introduces six practices of excellence fundamental to fostering leadership: communication, strategic planning, building community, personal growth, collaboration and sustaining legacy. In August, more than 3,800 students participated in Clemson Leader Day during Welcome Week.

Throughout their time at Clemson, students are continually exposed to leadership opportunities through Student Affairs

programs such as IMPACT, Certified Student Leader, Women in Leadership Conference as well as involvement in more than 519 registered student organizations.

**3,881**

Clemson Leader Day participants

**90.8%**

of students were confident in their ability to build community with others after participating in Clemson Leader Day



**361**

Total participants in Leadership Week across eight programs offered through a collaboration of 20+ campus and community partners



## Beginning the Leadership Journey

Clemson Leader Day brings together first-year students during Welcome Week each year and introduces them to key leadership principles.

# THE NO. 1 STUDENT EXPERIENCE



## **Building Her Future**

Katherine Harland, who graduated in May, was responsible for coordinating the Habitat for Humanity build on Bowman Field each of the past two years.

## **HARLAND LEAVES A LEGACY BY PRESIDING OVER 30TH YEAR OF HOMECOMING BUILD**

Katherine Harland's dream was to be in an urban environment. And not necessarily one ripe with rabid devotion to its college football team. It's funny how things work out.

*"I can't imagine another college experience,"* says Harland, a May architecture graduate. She was a member of the National Scholars Program, one of eight students to enroll in Fall 2020 at the height of a global pandemic. She was desperate to find an avenue for involvement and ended up locating the campus chapter of Habitat for Humanity.

Year by year, Clemson's campus chapter works in conjunction with the local Pickens County Habitat to build area homes. Its most visible project occurs each fall as part of Homecoming Week. Hundreds of volunteers — students, faculty, staff and local community members — come together and construct the framework for a Habitat home on Bowman Field in the span of days.

The past two years, Harland served as chapter president, leading a group of 12 officers who oversaw the annual Homecoming project and other organizational activities.

*"I've met people from all areas and have been provided with incredible leadership opportunities. I feel blessed for my time at Clemson,"* Harland says.



## **A Model Student**

Ashley McCollum served as undergraduate student body president this past year.

## **MCCOLLUM'S LEADERSHIP SHINES AS STUDENT BODY PRESIDENT**

There are many pathways to involvement at Clemson. Just ask Ashley McCollum.

Orientation Ambassador? Campus Tour Guide? Student government? Check, check, check. She even joined the gospel choir.

*"I became very involved when I got here,"* says McCollum, who served as undergraduate student body president in 2023-24. *"One of the most rewarding aspects of my experience was becoming an advocate for those who don't know how to use their voice, through my role as student body president."*

With a strong support system of family and friends, McCollum shined in office. She graduated in May with a biological sciences degree and even found time to help lead a group of students responsible for marketing and creating awareness of Clemson Music Fest, the first live music festival on campus in over a decade.

McCollum, who is pursuing a master's degree, has undoubtedly left an indelible mark on her alma mater.

*"I kept feeling like I had a big purpose ahead of me here,"* she says. *"I'm humbled by the opportunities I've had and positions I've been in."*



# WELCOMING TIGERS HOME



## Back-to-Back Wins

NPHC Fall Fest takes place annually each Homecoming. Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. earned a first-place finish for the second straight year for its choreographed performance.

## THIRD-GENERATION TIGER

Zeke Gaskins presided over Tigerama 2023, which took attendees “Beyond the Paw,” an ode to Clemson’s extensive reach.

The event included traditional student skits, performances by Tiger Band and the spirit groups, appearances by the Tiger football team, a large fireworks display and a post-event concert on the field of Memorial Stadium.

“There are never-ending bounds to Clemson,” says Gaskins, a native of Bishopville, South Carolina and third-generation Tiger who graduated in May with an industrial engineering degree. “It goes on with us after we leave.”

Gaskins is one of 12 in his extended family to attend Clemson.

“I was bred to be a Tiger,” he says. “I grew up coming to Homecoming games and Tigerama; it’s one of our oldest and greatest traditions and it was an honor and a privilege to lead this year’s event.”



## CLEMSON'S HOMECOMING TRADITIONS

Very few universities celebrate time-honored campus traditions quite like Clemson University.

Homecoming week (October 1-7) is full of the school’s most well-known traditions — Tigerama, Central Spirit floats and the Habitat for Humanity build on Bowman Field — took place alongside several other exciting programs such as the Miss Homecoming Pageant and National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC) Fall Fest.

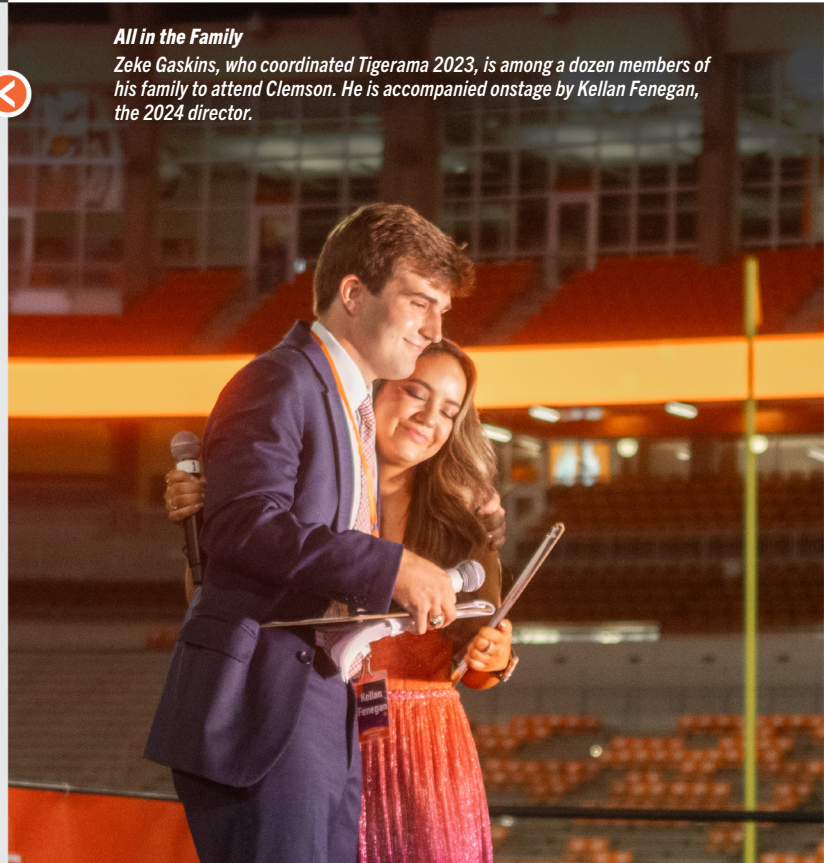
Members of NPHC fraternities and sororities performed in the fundraising competition known as Fall Fest — an event featuring choreographed step shows, dancing and thematic elements. The Lambda Theta chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. took home first place at the 2023 event, their second consecutive Fall Fest triumph. Homecoming serves as the culmination of a lot of long-range planning.

“It’s a lot of late nights getting the routine together and practicing our steps and strolls,” says Kamora Johnson, who graduated in December 2023. “It was great to leave my chapter with a bang by winning Fall Fest again at Homecoming.”



## All in the Family

Zeke Gaskins, who coordinated Tigerama 2023, is among a dozen members of his family to attend Clemson. He is accompanied onstage by Kellan Fenegan, the 2024 director.







#### **Tigers on Top**

Company C-4 of the Pershing Rifles won the 2024 Varsity Rifles trophy, the school's 12th national championship on record in the annual drill competition.

## TRAINING LEADERS: **PERSHING RIFLES**

Clemson has more than 500 student organizations, providing students ample opportunity to be involved. This past year, one of the most successful organizations was Company C-4 of the Pershing Rifles.

The organization added to its decorated history by winning the 2024 Varsity Rifles trophy at the national convention March 14-17 in Knoxville, Tennessee. Clemson earned three first-place drill finishes and accumulated the highest aggregate score among competing teams.

*"Clemson has a rich history of excellence in Pershing Rifles, and it meant everything to me and everyone else in the organization to perform as well as we did,"* says Sebastian Ducharne, commander of the Pershing Rifles who graduated in May.



#### **In Command**

Sebastian Ducharne, back, commands the Pershing Rifles during a 21-gun salute in Memorial Stadium as part of Clemson's Military Appreciation Day ceremony.

“

*No school does it better than Clemson. The ROTC and Pershing Rifles programs are phenomenal. It's a lot of work, but it's fulfilling and enriching and prepares students to have great careers.*

— Sebastian Ducharne, student

”

*"The consistent level of success Clemson has had over the years is a testament to the incredible culture within Pershing Rifles, and we could not be happier for these students,"* says Emily DaBruzzi, who advises the group as part of her role in Military & Veteran Engagement.

Pershing Rifles is a national society founded in 1894 at the University of Nebraska. Clemson's chapter was chartered in 1939. The organization regularly performs color guard, 21-gun salutes and POW/MIA "missing man" tables. They are an excellent example of the many ways our student organizations provide engaged learning and leadership development opportunities.

**72**

Performances during the 2023-24 academic year

**12**

Total national championships (Varsity Rifles trophies) earned by Clemson's Company C-4





## STRATEGIC PRIORITY THREE

# ACCESS AND BELONGING

✓  
***Sense of Belonging***

✓  
***Culture of Care***

✓  
***Access and Opportunity***

### POWER OF THE PAW

Clemson sent out Power of the Paw, a quick pulse survey, to all students during the Fall and Spring semesters.



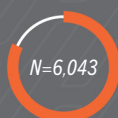
**91%**

Identified they would *definitely* or *probably* choose Clemson as their college destination again



**90%**

*Strongly agreed, agreed or somewhat agreed* they belong at Clemson



**84%**

*Strongly agreed, agreed or somewhat agreed* it is easy to make friends on this campus



# STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: MIA SUMERA



## Building Unity

Sumera, third from the right on the back row, organized a “Family Feud” collaboration that brought together all four governing councils in Fraternity and Sorority Life.



## Second-Generation Tiger

Sumera joined her father as graduates of Clemson when she earned a biological sciences degree in May.

## LEADING THROUGH EMPATHY

Mia Sumera has a genuine interest in public health. She is also intrigued by different types of human experiences.

Throughout her time at Clemson, the biological sciences major went about her business with a unique perspective combining the two — while building empathy in others.

Sumera was highly involved with Fraternity and Sorority Life, serving as a vice president for Sigma Kappa and as president of the organization’s Inclusion and Belonging Ambassadors. But perhaps her best display of empathy came in the form of an organization she founded and presided over from 2022-24, the Clemson Humanities Prison Initiative.

In conjunction with the Prison Education Program through Georgia State University, Sumera and other students volunteered monthly at Phillips State Prison and taught literature, speech and helped tutor inmates. The group even created a writing cohort with Greenville County Detention Center, leading reflective writing sessions each week.

“Going in for the first time as a volunteer, I didn’t know what to expect,” says Sumera, who graduated in May. “In my experience, the participants were very appreciative of the opportunity to learn and helped create productive dialogue with our volunteers. We formed great relationships.”

She would leave Clemson at 5 a.m. one Friday a month to visit the prison, usually with a total of four student volunteers. Through the initiative, she aimed to build a sense of community and help reduce the risk of recidivism.

Sumera is currently pursuing a Master of Public Health degree in epidemiology from Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia. She also continues to volunteer as a tutor at Phillips State Prison.

“

Growing up, I heard countless stories of my dad’s time at Clemson and his love for the school. While my experience differed from his, it certainly did not fall short. My Clemson journey, enriched by leading organizations, engaging in volunteer work and embracing a wide range of transformative opportunities, was crucial in shaping the person I have become.

— Mia Sumera, student

”





#### Smile for the Camera

Entering students form Clemson's iconic Tiger Paw at midfield of Memorial Stadium for the annual class photo.

## KICKING OFF A NEW YEAR

### WELCOME WEEK 2023

Main campus was buzzing with the arrival of students, signifying the start of another academic year. And with great anticipation also came the excitement of engaging nearly 4,700 first-year students in campus life. Welcome Week is designed to foster a student's sense of belonging and includes a wide variety of events, programs and activities. In 2023, more than 10,000 swipes were recorded at Welcome Week events such as New Student Convocation, Tiger Prowl and evening socials — providing the newest Tigers a high-quality introduction to the Clemson Experience.



#### Getting Settled

Welcome Week began with a successful Move-In of more than 7,100 new and continuing students into on-campus housing.



#### Tiger Traditions

Students enjoyed a welcome rally hosted by Central Spirit, where they learned different Clemson cheers and traditions.



#### On the Prowl

Each August, students are introduced to hundreds of organizations on campus through the annual Tiger Prowl involvement fair.



# A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT FOR ALL



**A Rewarding Moment**  
ClemsonLIFE students were initiated into Panhellenic sorority chapters during Bid Day 2023.

## THREE SORORITY CHAPTERS WELCOME CLEMSONLIFE STUDENTS AS NEW MEMBERS

Panhellenic Bid Day was rewarding on many levels. Perhaps no group enjoyed it more than the ClemsonLIFE students who were accepted as new members across three sorority chapters — Alpha Delta Pi, Chi Omega and Delta Delta Delta. In all, 53 ClemsonLIFE students have joined campus chapters since 2016.

*“This is the Clemson Family at its finest,”* says Erica Walters, program director for ClemsonLIFE. *“It’s very moving for the parents — many of whom were in attendance — who may have initially thought this would not have been a possibility for their student. ClemsonLIFE is embraced by our Panhellenic groups.”*

Taylor Nixon served as vice president for inclusion and belonging in Panhellenic and coordinated recruitment activities for the ClemsonLIFE students.

*“The students are shaking with excitement, which feeds my excitement,”* says Nixon, a Panhellenic executive board member who graduated with a psychology degree in May. *“One of the ClemsonLIFE women was initiated into my sorority (Chi Omega) and when she called me her sister, I began bawling.”*

Many tears flowed throughout the morning during what Gabriela Villicana described as one of the most impactful moments of the Panhellenic experience.

*“ClemsonLIFE students are fully invested and excited and bring a joy we don’t see every day in recruitment,”* says Villicana, who served as Panhellenic president and graduated in May with a marketing degree. *“They’ve had to go through a lot to get to this point, and that’s why we’re all sobbing while their parents and support system are turning them over to us. It’s so special.”*

**1,469**

Total new members of College Panhellenic Association sororities





# SUPPORT BEYOND *THE STUDENT*



*For the Love of Clemson*  
Members of the Clemson Family Ambassador Board gather for a group photo in Fall 2023.

## CLEMSON FAMILY AMBASSADOR BOARD EMBRACES NEW STUDENTS AND FAMILIES

As a parent, there is no flipping an on/off switch. For many, it can be difficult to say goodbye as students enter college. It's no different at Clemson. Fortunately, the university offers a multitude of ways to stay involved with students' experiences.

Tanya Tucker has been part of the Clemson Family Ambassador Board (CFAB) throughout her sons' time in the Upstate. She chairs the Fall Family Weekend Committee which brings families back to Clemson a few weeks into the semester to visit with their students.

*"We want our kids to have the best Clemson Experience they can have,"* says Tucker, a native of Rock Hill, South Carolina. *"And I've had a great experience as a parent of Clemson students."*

*"It's a great way to connect with all of the different resources that are available to students and share that information with other*

*new families coming in,"* adds Shae Rozakos M '98, an Anderson, South Carolina resident and Chair-Elect for 2025-26.

CFAB is comprised of approximately 60 members who volunteer as hosts, greeters and general ambassadors through annual events such as Move-In, Orientation and Family Weekend. Their presence is felt and appreciated by students and families alike, often providing information and resources critical to enhancing the Clemson Experience.

In other words — for CFAB members — it's an on/off switch that never flips to the off position.

**67,394**

Subscribers to the Clemson Parent and Family Experience online news portal

**2,245**

Families registered for Fall and Spring Family Weekend

**60+**

Volunteers make up the Clemson Family Ambassador Board



### *Time to Reconnect*

*Fall Family Weekend is one of CFAB's signature events, where thousands return to visit with students on a home football game weekend.*

“

*I have such a deep love for Clemson and I want new families coming in to have the same love for the University that I do.*

— Audrey Bufkin, CFAB Orientation Committee Chair

”





### Red, White, Blue... and Bronze

Shea Hammond, a senior paralympic soccer player, helped Team USA to a bronze medal at the 2023 Parapan American Games.

## BREAKING BARRIERS AND THRIVING

### SHEA HAMMOND'S STORY OF SELF-RELIANCE

Shea Hammond was diagnosed with cerebral palsy (CP) at an early age. But that hasn't stopped him from thriving.

At 13, Hammond earned a spot on the U.S. Paralympic National Team. He appeared in a game a few years later and is now a mainstay with the squad, traveling abroad to the likes of Ecuador, England, Peru and Spain. In November, he led Team USA to a 3-0 victory over Venezuela in the bronze medal match of the 2023 Parapan American Games. Hammond netted two of the three goals.

Hammond found his way to Clemson through a program that was established by Skye Arthur-Banning and Chuck Kneple that recruited out-of-state athletes with disabilities. Hammond was Clemson's first admitted undergraduate Paralympic soccer athlete in August 2020.

In addition to his Team USA exploits, Hammond and his father developed a non-profit in their home state of New Jersey called CP Soccer, which aims to provide opportunities through the sport of soccer to youth impacted by CP, stroke or traumatic brain injury. For his efforts, he was one of the inaugural recipients of the Service & Hope Award from the United States Olympic & Paralympic Foundation in December 2021.

Hammond graduated in May with a sports communication degree.



“

*Clemson and the surrounding community has been so supportive. My ultimate hope is for Clemson to be a place anyone with a disability can make something of themselves and to help pave the way for equal opportunity, recognition, respect and achievement.*

— Shea Hammond, student

”



# SERVING **THOSE WHO SERVED**



## **Honoring Fallen Heroes**

Clemson's military and student community came together to honor lives lost and the bravery of first responders by hosting a 9/11 Remembrance Stair Climb in Memorial Stadium.

## **CLEMSON ASCENDS TO NO. 7 MILITARY FRIENDLY® SCHOOL RANKING**

Clemson improved on its silver designation of the previous two years by surpassing the gold level and ascending to a No. 7 ranking nationally among Tier 1 research institutions as a Military Friendly® and Military Spouse Friendly® School. Final ratings reflect schools' abilities to meet thresholds for retention, graduation, job placement, repayment, persistence and loan default rates — specifically for student veterans.



### **Making the Grade**

Emily DaBruzzi accepts Clemson's certificate for its military academic program from David Rozelle of the South Carolina Department of Veterans' Affairs.

In FY24, Military & Veteran Engagement (MVE) and the VA Educational Benefits Office added full-time staff dedicated to serving veterans and military-connected students. Additionally, Counseling and Psychological Services provided a licensed clinician to focus specifically on the needs of veterans and

military-connected students. In the spring, MVE expanded its space by opening a second resource center on the third floor of Hendrix Student Center.

“

*A recognition like Military Friendly® Top 10 does not happen as the result of one program or department. It speaks to our broader military support network.*

— Emily DaBruzzi, Director of Military & Veteran Engagement

”

## **9/11 STAIR CLIMB HONORS FIRST RESPONDERS**

Clemson held a unique remembrance event on September 11 inside Memorial Stadium. Students, faculty, staff and community members came together on a humid morning to honor first responders and all whose lives were lost in the 9/11 terrorist attacks, by climbing stairs and walking the concourse of Clemson's famed football stadium.

*“We wanted to honor those who lost their lives on 9/11 and connect it to Clemson in a way that would be meaningful for everyone involved,”* says Chase Carter, a senior work-study student in the Military and Veteran Resource Center and veteran of the United States Marine Corps.

Following a welcome from MVE staff, participants ascended the steep aisles of the stadium, walking up every other portal of the south and north stands — some for the better part of two hours — in alignment with the timeline of events from 9/11. Names of those whose lives were lost scrolled the massive videoboard in the stadium, ensuring their names are never forgotten.



#### VIP Visit

U.S. Secretary of Veterans Affairs Denis McDonough speaks with Marine Corps veteran Chase Carter during a student roundtable event in February.

## CLEMSON WELCOMED VA SECRETARY DENIS McDONOUGH

U.S. Secretary of Veterans Affairs (VA) Denis McDonough visited Clemson in February as part of a listening tour in Upstate South Carolina. He met in the executive board room of the Wilbur O. and Ann Powers of College Business with student veterans from several schools, including Clemson, Southern Wesleyan University and Anderson University.

McDonough spent the better part of an hour meeting with students on a myriad of issues facing today's military-connected community. McDonough and members of the VA's regional office addressed questions about educational benefits, support for entrepreneurship and future opportunities for both human and capital resources.

*"My sense coming in was that Clemson has been a great partner for veterans and the VA," McDonough says. "Everything I experienced on my visit confirmed what I read and the data I looked at. Clemson is a great school with a rich history of supporting veterans and the military. It was really important for us to be here."*

## CALLED TO SERVE: JACKSON GRANT



#### A Career of Service

Jackson Grant, a veteran and student assistant with Military and Veteran Engagement, earned his commission as a second lieutenant in the United States Army.

Jackson Grant doesn't recall the primary reason behind his initial visit to the MVE Resource Center in Vickery Hall over the summer of 2022, but he remembered the impression it made on him as an enrolled student veteran navigating his very first day at Clemson.

Grant grew up in Clemson and graduated from nearby D.W. Daniel High School. In lieu of a traditional pathway to college, Grant opted to explore a career in the military. He landed in the United States Navy and served as a hospital corpsman, performing a wide range of clinical and specialty medical tasks from 2014-19, which included multiple deployments. He met his wife, Bailey — a Marine Corps veteran — in Hawaii and was married prior to a 2017 deployment. After leaving the Navy in 2019, Grant joined the Army Reserve and has accumulated 10 years of military service.

Grant transferred to Clemson in 2022 and hit the ground running. He called the resource center a "beacon" on campus for military-connected students. He joined the center as a VA work-study student and also discovered the Student Veterans of America (SVA) chapter, serving as the organization's treasurer. This spring, he earned a sociology degree and was commissioned into the Army as an officer — continuing his military career and service to others.

## No. 7

Military Friendly® and Military Spouse Friendly® designation among Tier 1 research institutions

## 4,716

Visits to the Military and Veteran Engagement Resource Center

## 108

Service members and student veterans graduated in FY24

## 1,202

Veterans and military-connected students enrolled

## FY24 HONORS

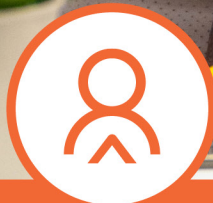
**Best Colleges for Vets**  
Military Times Magazine

**Silver Grade - Military Academic Program**

South Carolina Department of Veterans' Affairs

**Best Colleges for Veterans 2024**  
U.S. News and World Report (No. 55)





## STRATEGIC PRIORITY FOUR

# STAFF EXPERIENCE

▼  
*Clarity of Vision*

▼  
*Relationship Building*

▼  
*Growth and Engagement*

**1,710+**

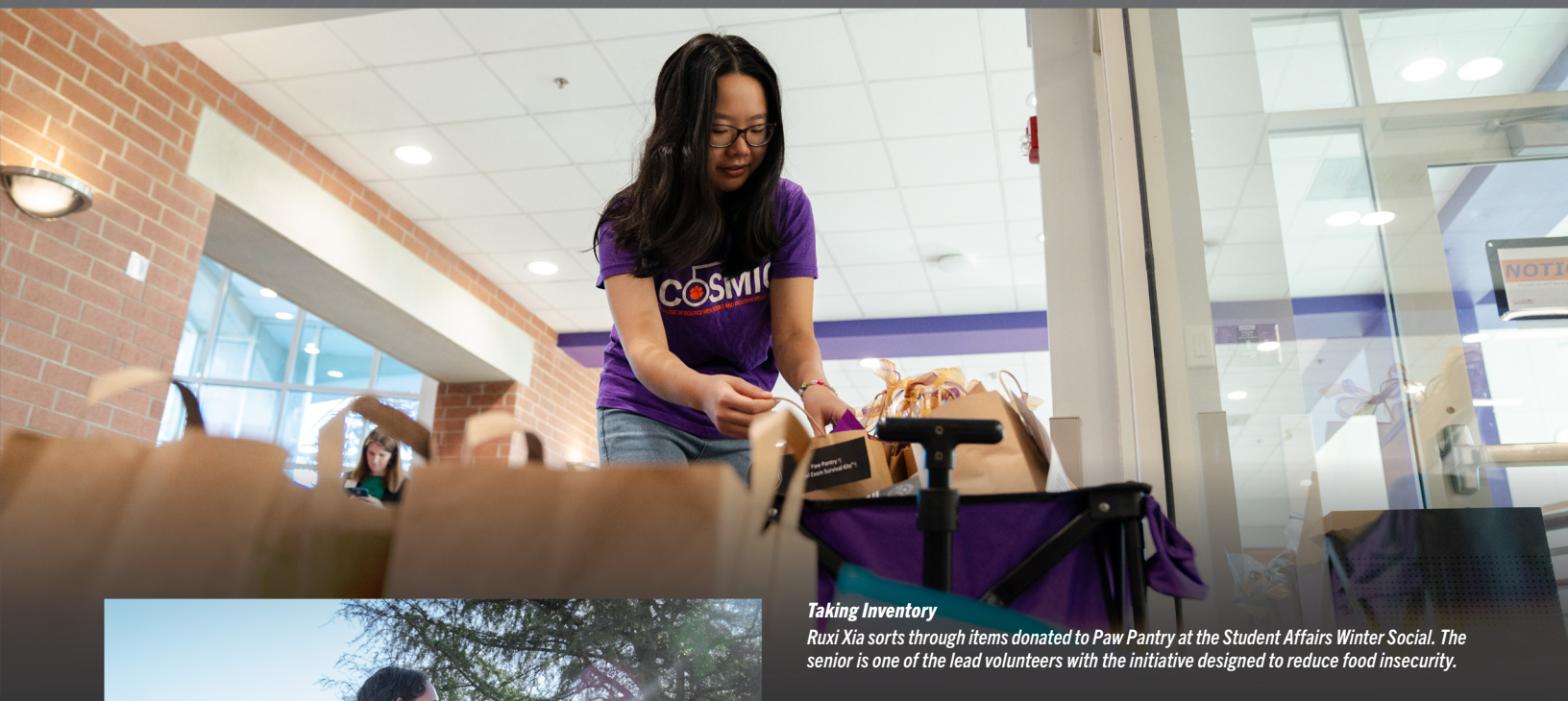
Interactions through outreach, education and training programs delivered by the Office of Advocacy and Success

**195**

Faculty, staff and graduate assistants attended Green Zone Training, a 93.1% increase over FY23



# INITIATIVE SPOTLIGHT: PAW PANTRY



## Taking Inventory

Ruxi Xia sorts through items donated to Paw Pantry at the Student Affairs Winter Social. The senior is one of the lead volunteers with the initiative designed to reduce food insecurity.



## On a Roll

Student Affairs staff members haul donations to Paw Pantry in Sistine Hall.

“Paw Pantry helps reduce food insecurity on campus,” says Xia, a senior biochemistry major. “Food resources can be hard to access, and transportation can be a barrier for some students.”

That’s why Xia and other students take it upon themselves — with the mentorship of advisers like Kate Radford (pictured in gray, left) in the Center for Student Leadership and Engagement — to help broaden Paw Pantry’s reach. Established in 2015, Paw Pantry is run entirely by student volunteers.

Paw Pantry receives generous donations from students, faculty, staff and the broader Clemson community. In December 2023, fraternities and sororities in the National Pan-Hellenic Council came together and dropped off a healthy portion of canned goods. The same week, Student Affairs collected bags full of items at their winter social in Hendrix Student Center to help stock the pantry for winter break.

The impact of being involved is not lost on Xia, who says “Paw Pantry has definitely helped me appreciate all that I have.”

“

*I love seeing students get the help they need. Collaborating with other organizations and seeing how people are addressing the problem of food insecurity and willing to make things more accessible to students is really rewarding.*

— Ruxi Xia, student


”

## STAFF SERVING STUDENTS: THE IMPACT OF GIVING BACK

Ruxi Xia describes her experience with Paw Pantry as life-changing. A community-wide initiative housed in Sistine Hall, Paw Pantry is designed to help students meet their foundational and nutritional needs.

In many ways, Xia is an extension of professional staff, working selflessly to better the Clemson Experience for all students.



A photograph of a man with a beard and a blue plaid shirt, identified as Jairad Hydrick, smiling and talking to a woman whose back is to the camera. The man is wearing a name tag that says "CLEMSON".

### Hitting the Mark

Jairad Hydrick advocates for open communication among his staff in Advocacy and Success to build a culture of CARE on Clemson's campus.

## CREATING A CULTURE OF CARE

### JAIRAD HYDRICK MENTORS STAFF CHARGED WITH SUPPORTING STUDENTS

Quickly displaying a strong acumen for supporting students in need, Jairad Hydrick was elevated to the director's role and assistant dean of students in the Office of Advocacy and Success. Hydrick leads Clemson's team responsible for serving as a connection point for students seeking campus and community resources.



Hydrick is a first-generation college student who saw first-hand the impact that can be made through a Dean of Students Office. He was a graduate assistant at the University of Dayton — where

he was pursuing a master's degree — when he got his first taste of navigating students through a wide variety of situations. It was strengthened at the University of South Florida when he was a residence life coordinator.

*"Those were invaluable experiences," he says, reflecting on his preparation prior to joining Clemson's staff in 2023. "I'm pretty early in my career, and I'm grateful for the opportunities that have been provided to me."*

Hydrick has worked hard to establish a similar mentorship framework for his current staff. Their goal is helping Clemson's student body of 28,000+ feel like they are having an intimate campus experience.

*"We really try and foster a sense of community within our team, so that we can have that respect and open communication with each other," he says.*

Advocacy and Success manages the CARE Network, a campuswide referral system for students whose concerns range from academics to behavior to relationships and beyond. His hope is that in time students feel empowered to reach out on their own and not always rely on the referral of others.

*"Each of our students brings their own unique experiences with them when they come to Clemson," he says. "To me, what would be most successful for us is seeing students engage with our office proactively about their needs — it would tell me there's a community that understands the CARE Network and is knowledgeable about available resources."*

**1,794**

Total CARE cases managed by Advocacy and Success





# Q&A WITH STUDENT AFFAIRS STAFF



## **The Interpersonal Violence Response Team**

*Lauren Parker (left) and Bat'sé Smart (right) lead the Interpersonal Violence Response Team, supporting student survivors of interpersonal violence.*

## **MEET CLEMSON'S INTERPERSONAL VIOLENCE RESPONSE TEAM**

Advocacy and support are their passions, and it's evident in the impactful work they do for student survivors of interpersonal violence. While only in their roles as Clemson's first Interpersonal Violence Response coordinators for a couple of years, Lauren Parker and Bat'sé Smart are no strangers when it comes to helping students feel safe and supported.

### **Q: What is your role as interpersonal violence response coordinators?**

**A:** Working as a team, we help students impacted directly or indirectly by interpersonal violence by connecting them with resources to get the support they need to begin their healing journey. The trauma doesn't have to be recent; it may have been before a student's time at Clemson. We also serve as advocates for student survivors as they navigate processes.

Because survivors are the experts of their own story, we always strive to empower students by giving them the options and information they need to make informed decisions. Empowerment means you feel comfortable enough to communicate your needs and to ask for the support you need to be successful in all areas of life.

### **Q: What services do you offer students?**

**A:** We primarily serve as a resource connector for students impacted by all forms of interpersonal violence. Taking a

holistic approach, resources can be on or off campus and may include counseling, housing, academic, legal, etc.

In addition to providing moral support, we try to create a community for students, which can also include helping students get connected to other organizations or departments on campus to find a community of their own.

Lastly, we offer an on-campus safe space – the Oak Room. It's a private place student survivors can utilize when they need a safe space to study or feel supported.

### **Q: How does interpersonal violence response enhance student well-being?**

**A:** The work we do directly impacts student survivors' well-being and success. In our role, we're able to advocate for students and support them as they navigate various processes and systems so they can begin healing.

There's evidence showing people who have a support system are more likely to bounce back from traumatic experiences than people who don't, and we're lucky to be part of that support system for our students. We want to make the process of getting services less overwhelming and less stressful, and the healing process less daunting, so student survivors are more likely to be successful in their classes, personal life, careers and lives beyond Clemson.



# INVESTING IN STAFF DEVELOPMENT



## Career Progression

Campus Recreation Associate Director Chris Cox (right) graduated from CU Grow, Clemson's staff development program, in November.



## CHRIS COX'S CU GROW EXPERIENCE

Managing the Snow Family Outdoor Fitness and Wellness Complex is a part of everyday work life for Campus Recreation's Chris Cox. It's only fitting, then, he chose to focus on something so familiar for his final project requirement as part of the most recent cohort of CU Grow — Clemson's professional development program for staff.

For his final project, Cox and others worked with campus partners to improve some of the infrastructure at the beautiful lakefront property. They established parking lots and consistent enforcement through Parking and Transportation Services. A site security plan was also completed with public safety that included additional camera installation and fencing around the complex.

*"Both of those were up and running by the time we graduated,"* says Cox, who also serves as associate director of sport programs for Campus Recreation.

“

*I'd recommend CU Grow to anyone that is even slightly interested in professional development. It's a great experience, from interacting with staff in other areas of the university to expanding your own knowledge and experience through exposure to leadership.*

— Chris Cox, Campus Recreation

”

Cox's typical monthly agenda consisted of guest speakers, facility tours and networking opportunities. Members of the cohort put together an individual development program, including webinars, conferences and classes. Cox was also required to attend operational and governance events — he opted to sit in on a public session of the Board of Trustees, for example.

*"Within Student Affairs, we have great opportunities to work together, but the breadth and exposure is multiplied through a program like CU Grow."*

With aspiring leaders like Cox, it's easy to see the positive impact staff development has on Student Affairs.





# THE IMPACT OF PHILANTHROPY

## GOSSETTS COMMIT FIRST-EVER CORNERSTONE GIFT TO STUDENT AFFAIRS



### Blazing a Trail

Bo and Donna Gossett, pictured with President Jim Clements, First Lady Beth Clements and Vice President Chris Miller, committed the first ever Cornerstone Gift to Student Affairs.

Bo and Donna Gossett continue to pave the way for student success at Clemson. By establishing a \$2.5 million Cornerstone Gift, the first exclusively dedicated to Student Affairs, their passion for helping others succeed is reflected.

“

*Through my involvement with Student Affairs over the years, I've seen first-hand the dedication to the well-being of our students, especially those who need it the most. There was nothing we wanted more than to put resources where it would make a difference in the lives of our students.*

– Bo Gossett, Cornerstone Partner

”

The Gossetts legacy of philanthropy and involvement and in their community continues to inspire and empower students for generations to come.

“As our latest Cornerstone Partners, Bo and Donna are making a significant and lasting impact in the lives of our Tigers,” says President Jim Clements. “Their endowment directly supports our strategic plan, Clemson Elevate, and is a commitment to creating the No. 1 student experience in the country.”

## MILLER FAMILY ENDOWMENT FOR THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students Chris Miller wanted to take direct action to enhance the Clemson Experience for students. He and his wife, Julie,

did just that by committing \$50,000 to establish the Miller Family Endowment for the Student Experience.

During his tenure, Clemson University made significant enhancements to the student experience — including the building and expansion of first-class facilities such as Samuel J. Cadden Chapel and the Snow Family Outdoor Fitness and Wellness Complex, respectively.

*“It’s often said that there’s something in these hills,” he says. “Having been here for eight years, that’s been solidified for me and my family. The University’s mission and culture truly resonates for us, and we wanted to be able to contribute to this impactful work in a meaningful way.”*

## JOHNSON CEMENTS LEGACY IN STUDENT MEMORIAL AND REFLECTION GARDEN



### Etched in History

Clemson alumna Ashley Johnson molded her handprints in concrete as a tangible representation of her gift that established the Johnson Family Student Memorial and Reflection Garden.

Ashley Johnson '89 cemented her legacy of giving back to her alma mater through a generous gift that created the Johnson Family Student Memorial and Reflection Garden, a serene and picturesque complement to Samuel J. Cadden Chapel. In the fall, she returned to campus, molded her handprints and signed her initials in concrete — the only request she made to celebrate the impact of her selfless gift.

**\$5,798,945**

Total raised in FY24

**213%**

Increase in total raised over FY23

**\$3,000,000+**

Raised in endowments to support the student experience



# SUPPORTING STUDENT AFFAIRS

## STUDENT AFFAIRS BUSINESS OPERATIONS

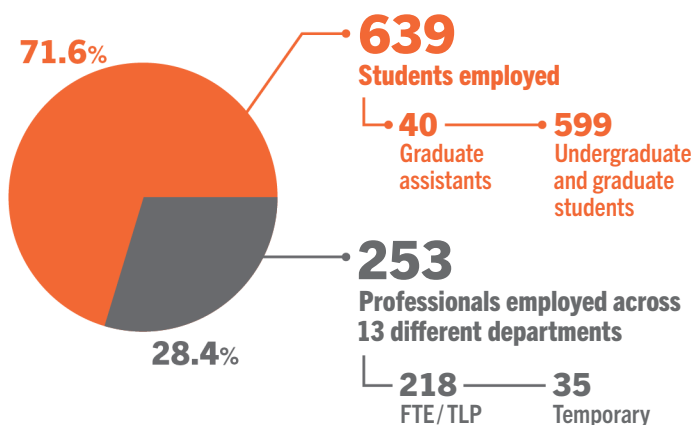
Student Affairs Business Operations (SABO) oversees, manages and supports the strategic integration and resource allocation of the division's overall budget of **\$38M+**. SABO is responsible for the development, tracking and processing of departmental and division finances, compliance oversight and human resource functions. In addition, SABO supports Clemson Undergraduate Student Government, Graduate Student Government, the Student Funding Board and registered student organizations by providing compliance oversight and financial management, advisement and transaction processing. *Note: FY24 budget totals reflect all sources of funds managed by the Division of Student Affairs, including Foundation, Endowment and Student Activity Fee dollars.*

### FY24 — TOTAL SOURCES **\$38,771,266**

State Appropriations, Tuition and Fees .....	\$6,669,023
Student Fees: Mandatory .....	\$13,975,948
External Revenues .....	\$14,453,816
Internal Revenues .....	\$654,133
Interest Income .....	\$129,839
Foundation & Endowments .....	\$587,491
Student Activity Fee/Student Orgs .....	\$2,301,016

### FY24 — TOTAL USES **\$37,297,506**

Staff Wages and Benefits .....	\$19,722,093
Student Wages and Benefits .....	\$4,005,845
Operating Expenses and Supplies .....	\$7,645,150
Professional Development and Travel .....	\$362,695
Equipment .....	\$298,429
Capital Projects/Fund Balance .....	\$717,700
University General and Administrative .....	\$1,061,360
Foundation & Endowments .....	\$1,205,467
Student Activity Fee/Student Orgs .....	\$2,278,767



## STRATEGIC INITIATIVES AND ASSESSMENT

Strategic Initiatives and Assessment is an important support area for Student Affairs. This newly assembled team of continuous improvement professionals works with division and campus partners to execute strategic processes, risk management oversight, business continuity plans and data-informed assessment practices.

### FY24 Highlights

- Collaborated with department heads on the Student Affairs strategic plan that serves as a guiding framework in alignment with Clemson Elevate
- Piloted a continuous improvement program with all Student Affairs departments in partnership with the Office of Institutional Excellence, resulting in 167 training sessions, five community of practice meetings and numerous projects
- Tracked 191 departmental metrics and key performance indicators
- Established 200+ formal mechanisms to collect student feedback







#### A Helping Hand

Clemson Family Ambassador Board member Audrey Bufkin hands out welcome packs to students during Tiger Prowl.

## CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Student Affairs has a rich history of supporting programs that contribute to the Clemson Experience for both students and the broader community. Corporate and Community Engagement plays a vital role within the division, securing and stewarding corporate and community partners. These partners provide supplemental revenue and value-added activities for our students, enhancing the No. 1 student experience. Other critical responsibilities include allocating funds for strategic initiatives and other activities not otherwise funded.

**\$379,346**

Sponsorship revenue accrued through corporate partnerships

**\$855,000**

Gift-in-kind for student experience

## COMMUNICATIONS AND CREATIVE SERVICES

Student Affairs enjoys strong support as the result of a partnership with the Division of Marketing and Communications. The partnership includes multimedia solutions, web and digital storytelling support,

email campaigns, and communication to key stakeholders, including students, families and staff.

### FY24 Highlights

- Earned national acclaim through digital and print design competitions, including Graphic Design USA awards for web/microsites, email marketing, digital ads and student work
- Managed more than 1,000 creative jobs and 3,300+ student organization mark/logo requests
- Published 91 articles to Clemson News, including personnel announcements, human interest features, major event previews/recaps and program/activity highlights
- Led the development and implementation of visual identity assets for the institution's values and new Student Affairs strategic plan, complete with banners, posters, messaging templates and website



**98.2%**

Of students opened a May graduation message, the highest open rate on record of an email generated from the Vice President's Office





***Thank You for 30+ Years of Impact***

*Mandy Hays retired in 2024 after more than 30 years of incredible impact on Clemson University and Student Affairs. Most recently assistant vice president for student engagement, she leaves behind an indelible legacy of selflessness and service to her alma mater.*





The Division of Student Affairs is deeply grateful to our colleagues, supporters and donors. Your generosity and commitment have been instrumental in creating a vibrant and enriching campus environment for our students.





*Division of*

**STUDENT AFFAIRS**



@ClemsonSA



@Clemson\_SA



[clemson.edu/studentaffairs](http://clemson.edu/studentaffairs)