



IMPACT REPORT

AY 2025-2026

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.

Welcome from the Vice President FOR STUDENT AFFAIRS

Clemson Community,

As we reflect on another remarkable year, I am filled with gratitude and optimism. This year marked an exciting period of transition and momentum for our institution, culminating in August with the arrival of our 16th president, Benjamin Ayers. On behalf of Student Affairs, I extend a warm welcome to President Ayers and look forward to building on Clemson's strong foundation together. We also welcomed Provost Cole Smith, who joined Clemson as provost in January and has already made a significant impact through his leadership and dedication to strengthening the University's outstanding academic reputation.

I would also like to express my sincere appreciation to Interim President Emeritus Bob Jones, who graciously served Clemson during the presidential transition. His steady leadership benefited the entire University community, and I am personally grateful for the guidance and support he has provided me.

Within Student Affairs, we continued building a leadership team dedicated to delivering the No. 1 Student Experience. We welcomed Kathy Bush Hobgood as senior associate vice president, bringing a proven record of excellence and a deep commitment to student success. At the same time, we celebrated the retirement of George Smith after more than 35 years of distinguished service to Clemson students and families.

This year also saw the successful integration of Auxiliary Enterprises teams back into Student Affairs, creating greater alignment across the environments, services and experiences that shape student life. Our partnership with MUSC Health reached an important milestone with the groundbreaking of a new medical facility scheduled to open in Summer 2027. The strength of the Clemson experience is reflected in extraordinary outcomes, including nearly 67,000 first-year applications, a 94.1% first-year retention rate and an 87.5% six-year graduation rate.

Finally, thank you to the many donors and advocates whose generosity continues to elevate the student experience. By supporting innovative programs, expanding opportunities and enhancing facilities, your investments help create a Clemson experience where every student can thrive. Together, we are building a stronger Clemson and a brighter future for generations of students.

Go Tigers!

Doug Hallenbeck, Ph.D.
Vice President for Student Affairs



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THIS IS STUDENT AFFAIRS



Deliver the No. 1 Student Experience



EXCEL IN EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING.



AMPLIFY ACADEMIC SUCCESS.



PROMOTE THE CLEMSON EXPERIENCE.

Vision and Mission

Student Affairs will deliver the No. 1 student experience.

Our mission is to build tomorrow's leaders through value-driven programs and experiential learning opportunities.

Strategic Priorities



WELL-BEING
Supporting the Whole Student



CULTURE OF CARE
Building Community and Belonging



SPACES AND PLACES
Enhancing the Clemson Experience



LAYING A FOUNDATION
Preparing for Post-Graduate Success



CULTURE OF PURPOSE
Enhancing the Staff Experience

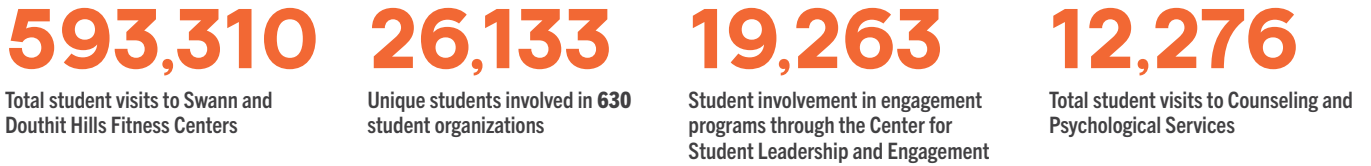
STUDENT AFFAIRS AT A GLANCE

Student Affairs altered its annual reporting window for 2025-2026 from the July 1-June 30 fiscal year to the academic year including Fall 2025 through Summer 2026. By capturing summer programs and services, this year’s report offers a more complete picture of how Student Affairs delivers the No. 1 student experience year-round.

Who We Serve



How We Serve



Graduate Community Director Jake Czaplicki receives his Student Affairs M.Ed. hood. He earned his master’s degree in May.

University Brags

- THE PRINCETON REVIEW’S BEST 389 COLLEGES 2026:**
- **No. 6**, Best Alumni Networks (Public)
 - **No. 11**, Best Schools for Internships (Public)
 - **No. 16**, Students Love Their School Teams
 - **No. 20**, Best Career Services
 - **No. 24**, Best Athletic Facilities
 - Best in the South
 - Best Value Colleges
 - Green Colleges
- “BEST FOR VETS” 2025 COLLEGES:**
- **No. 1** in South Carolina
 - **No. 13** overall
- MILITARY FRIENDLY® 2026-27:**
- Gold Recognition
- TIME MAGAZINE, 2026:**
- Best Colleges for Future Leaders
- USA TODAY, 2026:**
- **No. 6**, Best Small Town in the South
 - **No. 8**, Best Small College Town
- U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT 2026:**
- **No. 15**, Co-Ops and Internships
 - **No. 28**, Most Innovative Schools
 - **No. 36**, Top Public Schools
 - **No. 39**, First-Year Experiences
 - **No. 45**, Best Colleges for Veterans
- NICHE’S 2026 BEST COLLEGE RANKINGS:**
- **No. 1**, Best Colleges in South Carolina
 - **No. 1**, Top Public Universities in South Carolina

University Student Awards

- NORRIS MEDAL**
Sara Alkelani
- ALGERNON SYDNEY SULLIVAN STUDENT AWARD**
Mercy Crapps, Trey Larkins

Division Awards

- ALMEDA R. JACKS OUTSTANDING UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT AWARD**
Isabella Eckert
- WALTER T. COX GRADUATE STUDENT AWARD**
Emily Fisher
- RISING STAR AWARD**
Fatima Berlanga Molina
- MATT LOCKE LEADERSHIP AWARD**
Katie Barfield
- FRANK A. BURTNER SCHOLARSHIP**
Luther Bells, Ava McKee, Olivia Palmieri
- GRADUATE ASSISTANT DEGREE RECIPIENTS**
- Fauz Adeyinka (Campus Recreation)
 - Liz Bagatini (Campus Recreation)
 - Ashlyn Ballew (Residential Living)
 - Tori Braren (Residential Living)
 - Jake Czaplicki (Residential Living)
 - Matthew Inman (Residential Learning)
- Tayllor Johns (Campus Recreation)
 - Rebecca Lara (Center for Student Leadership and Engagement)
 - HK Orr (Campus Recreation)
 - Jayme Snider (Advocacy and Success)
 - Paul Terrell (Residential Living)
 - Kiarra Vacek (Residential Living)
 - Savanna Vest (Residential Living)
 - Skylar Walder (Residential Living)
 - Molly Yonker (Center for Student Leadership and Engagement)





CULTURE OF PURPOSE

ENHANCING THE STAFF EXPERIENCE



In Student Affairs, a strong staff experience begins with a culture of purpose, where every team member understands the division’s vision, priorities and how their work contributes to them. Student Affairs strengthens that culture by recognizing excellence, encouraging innovation and supporting staff in exploring new ideas that improve our work and the student experience. Through ongoing professional development opportunities, Student Affairs invests in the growth of its people, building a stronger and more adaptable team. Effective communication and accountability remain essential, ensuring individual contributions and collective efforts are aligned and focused on achieving meaningful results.

Division Staff Awards

2025 EMPLOYEES OF THE YEAR

- Taylor Casey (Residential Living)
- Scott Cook (Military and Veteran Engagement)
- Heath Fulmer (Campus Reservations and Events)
- Chloe Ogden (Community and Ethical Standards)
- Ti-Ana Pyatt (Center for Student Leadership and Engagement)

2025 TEAM OF THE YEAR

Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life

2025 STUDENT AFFAIRS PARTNERSHIP AWARD

Radek Ostrowski (Office of Institutional Effectiveness)

Miscellaneous Honors

UNIVERSITY AWARDS AND POSITIONS

- Alesia Smith (Assistant Vice President): *Algernon Sydney Sullivan Non-Student Award*
- Victoria Perry (Campus Recreation): *Staff Senate President*
- Jay Cooley (Counseling and Psychological Services): *Staff Senate*
- Trina Krieger (Campus Recreation): *Staff Senate*
- Scott Cook (Military and Veteran Engagement): *Staff Member of the Game vs. Furman*
- Jennifer Goree (Healthy Campus): *Staff Member of the Game vs. Syracuse*

PRESIDENT’S LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

Pam Davis (Senior Director of Strategic Initiatives)

PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP

- Cassi Bowen (Residential Living): *Institute for the Curricular Approach*
- Taylor Casey (Residential Living): *Southeastern Association of Housing Officers*
- Amber Dees (Residential Living): *Southeastern Association of Housing Officers*
- Casey Ford (Center for Student Leadership and Engagement): *National Orientation Transition & Retention Association*
- Yolande Graham (Residential Learning): *Institute for the Curricular Approach*
- Doug Hallenbeck (Vice President for Student Affairs): *Council on Student Affairs, Executive Committee of the Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities*
- Kathy Hobgood (Student Affairs Leadership): *President of Association of College and University Housing Officers – International*
- Mark Jestel (Housing Operations): *Association of College and University Housing Officers – International*
- Jana Jordan-Miller (Residential Living): *Southeastern Association of Housing Officers*
- DJ Moore (Residential Living): *South Carolina Housing Officers Association*
- Michael Parrish (University Housing): *Clemson Center for Geospatial Technologies*
- Ti-Ana Pyatt (Center for Student Leadership and Engagement): *National Association for Campus Activities Leadership Fellow; Southern Association for College Student Affairs*
- Robert Taylor (Campus Recreation): *Leadership Clemson*

Full Time Staff Degree Recipients

- Cassey Lessane (Residential Living)
- Donnie Lloyd (Auxiliary Planning and Support)

▼ Campus Recreation’s Victoria Perry was sworn in as Staff Senate president in Spring 2026.

Scott Cook was honored as Staff Member of the Game for Military Appreciation Day against Furman.



WELL-BEING

SUPPORTING THE WHOLE STUDENT

- Provide easily accessible and high-quality health care and counseling services
- Encourage lifelong healthy habits by equipping students with knowledge, skills and confidence to make investments in their well-being
- Support healthy behaviors with innovative spaces and educational programs

WHAT'S AHEAD

Zach Freeman leads CUSG with humility and purpose

Sara Alkelani's experience rooted in service, scholarship and global impact

Fueling well-being through Clemson Dining

Healthy Campus creates a thriving student body

Collaboration between Campus Recreation and PRTM brings learning to life

Developing the next generation of fitness pros

Partnership with MUSC Health elevating the student health experience

Launching an innovative Well-Being Initiative

Students take part in a group fitness session in Swann Fitness Center at Fike.



10,326

Total student participants in Clemson Outdoor Recreation and Education (CORE) programs

26,292

Total student visits to medical health services

99.3%

of students surveyed by Student Affairs felt the staff was committed to their well-being (N=833)

VALUES IN ACTION



INTEGRITY

LEADING WITH HUMILITY AND PURPOSE

For Zach Freeman, integrity has always meant saying yes to opportunities to serve, even when the path forward is uncertain.

A management and marketing double major from Fayetteville, Arkansas, Freeman enrolled at Clemson without ever visiting campus. Encouraged by mentors, he got involved across the University community and, despite never having served in student government, took a leap of faith and ran for undergraduate student body president.

When the election results arrived, Freeman was with his mother, who was visiting Clemson for his Ring Ceremony. “It was amazing to experience that with her,” he says.

That willingness to step outside his comfort zone defined his presidency.

“Choosing to run for Student Body President was the best decision ever,” he says. “It’s been such a blessing to give back to Clemson because it’s given me so much.”

Throughout his Clemson experience, Freeman has distinguished himself not only through his accomplishments, but also his humble and intentional approach. He served as treasurer of Pi Kappa Alpha, where his chapter initiated ClemsonLIFE student Charlie McGee as a fraternity brother. “We went in thinking Charlie was going to change our lives, but ultimately he’s the one who changed ours,” Freeman says.

He also served as vice president of finance for Order of Omega, a recruitment ambassador for the Wilbur O. and Ann Powers College of Business, recruitment captain for the Interfraternity Council and a member of the IPTAY Student Advisory Board.

As president, Freeman valued working behind the scenes with University leaders, including Vice President for Student Affairs Doug Hallenbeck and Associate Vice President and Dean of Students Kimberly Poole. His favorite memory was helping create the “People’s Float” during Homecoming 2025, open to every student and sponsored by student government.



“Choosing to run for Student Body President was the best decision ever... It’s been such a blessing to give back to Clemson because it’s given me so much.”

- ZACH FREEMAN



SARA ALKELANI

Service, Scholarship and Global Impact

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT – SARA ALKELANI

Sara Alkelani has always been a leader rooted in service, connection and a belief that every student deserves a sense of belonging.

A political science and sociology double major from Greenville, South Carolina, Alkelani emerged as one of Clemson University’s most accomplished students — earning the 2026 Norris Medal as the top all-around undergraduate. A Rhodes Scholar finalist and member of both the National Scholars Program and Dixon Global Policy Scholars Program, she paired academic excellence with a commitment to improving the student experience on campus and beyond.

Alkelani served as secretary of the Donor Relations and Service Committee within Clemson Undergraduate Student Government and was an active member of Blue Key Honor Society and Alpha Phi Omega, two of Clemson’s top service and leadership organizations. She also founded Clemson’s chapter of Every Campus a Refuge (ECAR), helping connect students with local efforts

to support resettled families while fostering a more welcoming and inclusive campus culture.

Her experiences extended far beyond Clemson. Alkelani studied abroad in South Africa and interned on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., experiences that deepened her interest in international policy and public service. She also worked as a photography services intern within the Division of Marketing & Communications, capturing authentic moments that reflected the student experience.

In April, Alkelani was invited by Vice President for Student Affairs Doug Hallenbeck to share her Clemson journey during a Student Affairs Committee panel at the Board of Trustees quarterly meeting. With a strong background in service, storytelling and advocacy, Alkelani’s passion has remained constant: ensuring students from all backgrounds feel seen, heard and valued. Her impact on Clemson will be felt long after graduation.

▲ Sara Alkelani was the 2026 Norris Medal recipient and a Rhodes Scholar finalist.



FUELING STUDENT WELL-BEING

CLEMSON DINING

At Clemson, dining is about more than what students eat. It's about creating spaces where they can connect, recharge and thrive.

Beyond the 10,000+ meal plans sold to undergraduates (according to Fall 2025 data), Clemson Dining creates opportunities for community through signature events such as Friendsgiving, cookie decorating, Coffee with a Cop, farmers markets and Exam Cram programs during finals week. Students also play a direct role in shaping the dining experience through the Dining Advisory Board, which meets monthly to provide feedback and help develop new initiatives and themed events. A strong focus on well-being remains central to Clemson Dining's mission. Through "Eat Well" programs, "Dietitian's Pick" recommendations, ingredient transparency and

allergy consultations, the team supports students' health while ensuring every student has access to nutritious, informed dining choices.

Over the past year, Clemson Dining expanded its offerings and enhanced the student experience through new dining locations, extended services and wellness-focused programming. Students welcomed the addition of Sully's Steamers at Core Campus, bringing one of South Carolina's most popular bagel destinations to the heart of campus. The Lucky Duck Bistro opened on the ground floor of the Nieri Family Alumni and Visitors Center, serving students, faculty, staff, families, guests and golfers at the Walker Course. Additionally, Clemson's contracted partner, Aramark, opened a new catering kitchen at the Madren Center and introduced a campus rewards program through retail Starbucks locations in the Douthit Hills Community Hub and Cooper Library.

In partnership with Undergraduate Student Government, the dining team expanded operating hours at the Douthit Hills Community Hub, providing students with greater flexibility and access to food options throughout the day in one of Clemson's largest on-campus housing districts — ensuring students have every opportunity to be well-fueled.



► Residential Executive Chef Hannah Pandey greets students with food and a smile inside the dining hall.



CREATING A THRIVING STUDENT BODY

HEALTHY CAMPUS

Healthy Campus creates an environment where Clemson students can thrive: academically, personally and socially. Through a wide range of educational tools, supportive programming and intentional outreach, the office aims to promote lifelong well-being in students.

One of Healthy Campus' most impactful initiatives annually is Aspire to Be Well, a foundational program that provides students with knowledge and resources to support their well-being. In Fall 2025, the program achieved a 98% completion rate. Feedback from more than 1,600 students who responded to a post-event survey reflected a learning environment grounded in respect, care and a shared commitment to student well-being.

Healthy Campus collaborated with campus and community partners on programs such as Spring Break Bash, promoting safety and responsible decision-making before students departed for spring break. Healthy Campus partnered with Undergraduate Student Government and the University's Well-Being Officer — using data from the Power of the Paw survey — to develop a comprehensive well-being resource hub in Canvas, the online home for students. Positioned prominently in the platform's navigation, the hub provides students with easy access to campus and community resources spanning all eight dimensions of well-being, creating a holistic and highly visible support system.

Together, these initiatives help students succeed in every aspect of their Clemson experience.

▲ Emma McLaughlin, who earned a marketing degree in May 2026 leads a facilitator training for the Aspire to be Well program.

7,274
Unique students completed
Aspire to be Well training in
AY 2025-2026

908
Total participants in Tigers
Together Suicide Prevention
Advocacy Training

“When you take the classroom knowledge and the immersive experience and combine them together, it helps the concepts come to life.”

- KELLY BARDUSK



CAMPUS REC PARTNERS WITH ACADEMICS TO BRING HANDS-ON LEARNING TO LIFE

Respect is built through understanding, and in PRTM 3630 (Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management), students gain that understanding by experiencing campus recreation from every angle.

Each Monday this spring, Kelly Bardusk was busy teaching the foundations of campus recreation, exploring industry trends, organizational structures and professional practices. By Wednesday, students were no longer observing concepts from a classroom seat — they were living them through fitness classes, intramural sports, facility tours and outdoor recreation experiences.

Created in Spring 2025, the course serves as a bridge between Campus Recreation and the PRTM. The course reflects a shared commitment to connecting academic learning with real-world application. Through direct engagement with Campus Recreation staff and programs, students gain insight into the planning, expertise and intentionality behind creating safe, respectful environments for the Clemson community.

For Bardusk, experiential learning helps students develop empathy and appreciation for the professionals who support student well-being. For PRTM Department Chair Bob Barcelona, the partnership demonstrates that meaningful learning happens across campus — in recreation centers, outdoor spaces and athletic fields as much as in traditional classrooms.

“When you take the classroom knowledge and the immersive experience and combine them together, it helps the concepts come to life,” Bardusk says. “I think it also adds a bit of empathy and understanding from the professional lens of recreational management — an acknowledgment of what it means to create a welcoming environment.”



▲ The Southeast Fitness Expo brought hundreds of current and aspiring collegiate recreation professionals to Clemson for its annual event.

SOUTHEAST FITNESS EXPO

DEVELOPING THE NEXT GENERATION OF FITNESS PROFESSIONALS

Campus Recreation hosted nearly 600 fitness instructors on campus in February for the 2026 Southeast Collegiate Fitness Expo. The annual convention — this year appropriately dubbed “Tigertown Throwdown” — welcomed students and staff representing 44 colleges and universities across the Southeast region.

FitExpo '26 featured a busy schedule of events, demonstrations and breakout sessions that took place in Campus Rec’s state-of-the-art facilities: Swann Fitness Center at Fike, Douthitt Hills Fitness Center and the Snow Family Outdoor Fitness and Wellness Complex.

“It was incredible to welcome such a large group of young professionals to campus for the expo,” says Robert Taylor, senior director of Campus Recreation and one of the host committee members for the event. “Most of the attendees were student

staff, including a heavy concentration of undergraduates. The expo not only provided them with an opportunity to enhance their professional network, but also earn continuing education credits which are vital to maintaining group fitness and personal training certifications.”

Clemson’s Campus Rec staff and alumni were present throughout the conference and led several breakout sessions across a range of fitness programs and disciplines. Additionally, the Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management led a couple of different breakout sessions — including one on wheelchair basketball.

The event underscored Clemson’s reputation as a national leader in collegiate recreation and

fitness, setting the standard for student development, innovation and professional preparation.



VALUES IN ACTION



RESPECT



MUSC HEALTH PARTNER

ELEVATING THE STUDENT HEALTH EXPERIENCE

▲ Leaders from Clemson, MUSC Health and Prisma Health take part in a ceremonial groundbreaking.

A state-of-the-art medical facility will open at Clemson in Fall 2027. Leaders from MUSC Health and Clemson joined together in February for the new facility’s ceremonial groundbreaking.

Clemson is partnering with MUSC Health to deliver the highest-quality student health and wellness experience, providing the broader community with on-campus access to comprehensive health care.

PLANNED MEDICAL FACILITY FEATURES:

- A 90,000-square-foot building designed to support patient-centered, advanced clinical care and enhanced operational efficiency
- Increased space for student health and wellness, including a pharmacy, lab, radiology, allergy/immunization clinic, counseling/psychological services and telehealth
- Advanced imaging capabilities
- Employee and occupational health access
- A sports medicine and ambulatory surgery center operated by Prisma Health Blue Ridge Orthopedics
- A human performance research center

“MUSC Health’s partnership with Clemson University brings together two institutions committed to elevating the student experience and strengthening community well-being,” said David J. Cole, M.D., FACS, president of the Medical University of South Carolina.

The facility will replace Redfern Health Center, built in 1969, and expand Clemson University’s current medical, counseling and psychological services to include advanced imaging, a human performance research center and an ambulatory surgery center. The new facility will provide a comprehensive approach to health and well-being while advancing academic and research relationships between MUSC Health and Clemson University.

Student health and medical services available in the facility will be operated by MUSC Health, building on the strong foundation of Clemson’s Student Health Services, which is accredited by The Joint Commission for high-quality patient care. Prisma Health will also have a presence within the facility, expanding access to care and services available on campus.

The three-story complex will feature the combined strengths of the No. 1 comprehensive academic health system and No. 1 academic institution in the state of South Carolina – positioning Clemson and MUSC Health at the forefront of innovative health care and well-being services.

THE IMPACT OF GIVING

A NEW ERA OF STUDENT WELL-BEING

A new era of student well-being is taking shape at Clemson thanks to the generosity of donors who believe every student deserves to thrive. A lead gift of \$50,000 from April Murray Gray ‘94, M ‘96 inspired a matching challenge that was met by Joe ‘99 and Tricia Matthews.

Together, their investment establishes a signature Health and Well-Being Coaching program to help students build lifelong skills for success in the classroom and beyond. Through one-on-one partnerships with certified Health and Wellness Coaches, students will receive personalized guidance to strengthen healthy habits and build resilience. Coaching takes a holistic approach to well-being, encompassing all eight dimensions, including a deeper sense of purpose and belonging.

“I am proud to support Clemson’s well-being initiative because every student deserves the opportunity to feel supported, build resilience, discover connection and belonging, and thrive during their experience,” says Murray Gray.

The Matthews family shares that commitment. “Our family includes a Clemson alumnus, a current student and a pediatrician. Mental, physical and social wellness is a passion for our family. It is an honor to be able to help every student feel a part of the Clemson community and reach their full potential.”

Their generosity reflects a shared belief that investing in student well-being is an investment in every student’s future and in the strength of the Clemson community.



\$977,572

Dollars raised in support of Student Affairs in FY26, including **\$100,000** through the April Murray Gray Challenge to support student well-being

\$74,727

Dollars raised in support of Student Affairs on Give Day, an increase of **296.4%** over FY25

▲ April Murray Gray ‘94
M ‘96



▲ Joe ‘99, Tricia Matthews and family

CULTURE OF CARE

BUILDING COMMUNITY AND BELONGING

- Facilitate seamless transitions to campus life through community-based residential experiences and first-year student programs
- Promote ongoing engagement opportunities to support personal interests and career readiness skill development
- Provide services to support students with personal and academic challenges
- Ensure communication strategies inform, educate and drive value for all constituent groups

WHAT'S AHEAD

Kazi Rana expands opportunities and strengthens community for graduate students

Anna Holstein leads The Pursuit to record fundraising, impact

Weeks of Welcome expands to help students find their place

Ten years of impact: Building community at Clemson's core

Panhellenic recruitment culminates with the excitement of Bid Day on the Lower Intramural Field.



7,299

Students attended Tiger Prowl, Clemson's annual organization recruitment fair held during Weeks of Welcome

1,877

CARE Network referrals processed

4,805

Students attended hazing and risk prevention programming through Fraternity and Sorority Life

VALUES IN ACTION

 DIVERSITY

**EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES,
STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY**

Utilizing his unique perspective as an international student, Kazi Rana has worked to strengthen connections among students, University leadership and the Clemson community.

Rana is pursuing a Ph.D. in biomedical data science and informatics and came to Clemson after working professionally in marketing and sales in his home country of Bangladesh. He began his graduate studies at Western Michigan University and considered several other schools before deciding on Clemson's Ph.D. program.

Following a stint as a senator in Graduate Student



Government (GSG), Rana was elected to and served in the role of president in 2025-26.

"Being able to represent Clemson's 6,000 graduate students has been both an honor and a privilege," he says. "Graduate students face different types of challenges, so if I can do something for them to make their experiences even a little bit better, I'll be happy at the end of the day."

There's little doubt Rana has done just that during his presidency. Key outcomes during his term included expansion of student-facing programming, strengthened collaboration with faculty

and administrative leadership, and strategic advocacy development.

Rana and members of his Cabinet attended Clemson Day at the State House to represent graduate student interests at the state level. He took it a step further a month later when South Carolina Senate President Thomas Alexander '78 attended and delivered a keynote prior to the GSG election forum — the first state senator ever to meet with Clemson's graduate students. Rana presented Alexander with two plaques — one a certificate of appreciation and the other for distinguished public service recognition.

"Senator Alexander's story is an example to all of us and reflects the very values we strive to uphold as graduate students."

"Graduate students face different types of challenges, so if I can do something for them to make their experiences even a little bit better, I'll be happy at the end of the day."

- KAZI RANA



**ANNA
HOLSTEIN**

Leading The Pursuit to Record-Breaking Impact

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT – ANNA HOLSTEIN

Established in 2012, The Pursuit — Clemson's clue-based competition that pits participating students in a race against each other and time — began humbly as a spring event to match the energy of a typical fall football season. The tradition originally supported the Student Emergency Fund, which assisted students experiencing crises. In 2024, a more pressing issue was identified on campus — food insecurity. Thus, the Students Helping Students Fund was born.

The fund directly sponsors meal plans for students in need. Every dollar raised through The Pursuit goes straight to the fund — business sponsorships, individual sign-up fees, general donations and more.

"The goal of this fund is to allow students to focus on being a student," says Anna Holstein, a May 2026 health science graduate and director of The Pursuit. "If you're stressed about where your next meal is coming from, it's hard to focus on building

an incredible student experience and loving Clemson the way a lot of people can."

Her initial goal was to raise \$75,000 through The Pursuit, which would have represented an increase over the prior year. Thanks to Holstein's incredible leadership, the final check revealed an amount she could not have fathomed — \$105,972.70. Holstein covered her mouth with her left hand, clearly in awe of all that had been done to benefit students, putting an exclamation point on her Clemson experience.

"Hopefully participating in The Pursuit helped students truly feel like a part of the Clemson Family, part of something bigger than themselves. Whether it's rubbing Howard's Rock and running down the Hill to finish the race, or donating money to a good cause, inspiring that feeling in others made it a success."

▲ Anna Holstein, a native of Chapin, South Carolina, earned an undergraduate degree in health science in May.



WEEKS OF WELCOME

HELPING STUDENTS FIND THEIR PLACE

In Fall 2025, Student Affairs introduced an expanded programming schedule for new students known as Weeks of Welcome, building on the success of the University’s traditional opening week prior to the start of classes. Weeks of Welcome put together a wide range of programs, activities, events, workshops and collaborative seminars — geared toward the incoming Class of 2029.

“Transition takes time, and welcoming students to campus takes more than one week,” says Casey Ford, director of student experience in the Center for Student Leadership and Engagement. “Our goal with this expansion is to provide continued, structured programming throughout students’ first six weeks, so they continue to feel the same support our traditional Welcome Week has always offered.”

Aligning perfectly with 2025 Family Weekend, the new initiative led first-year students through specific focuses — including building community, forming healthy habits, practicing study strategies and financial literacy.

“As we continue providing the No. 1 student experience, Weeks of Welcome offers a way for each corner of campus to impact students in such a pivotal time of their Clemson journeys,” Ford says.

Weeks of Welcome 2025

- Week 1: Roar & Explore
- Week 2: Calling Clemson Home
- Week 3: The Way to Well-Being
- Week 4: All In for Academics
- Week 5: Adulting Unleashed
- Week 6: Elevate Your Impact

MEET CLEMSON'S NEWEST STUDENTS (FALL 2025)

5,084

First-year students

1,798

Transfer students

1,333

Graduate students

49

States represented

THE IMPACT OF GIVING

BUILDING COMMUNITY AT CLEMSON'S CORE

Ten years ago, Clemson’s west side of main campus was transformed by a project designed to bring living, learning, dining and connection closer together. The Core Campus project added beds in what are now Gressette, Cribb and DesChamps halls, new dining space in The Dish at McAlister, as well as new academic and gathering spaces.

The project grew from early conversations about Johnstone Meadows and Clemson University’s broader campus housing master plan. Doug Hallenbeck, then executive director of housing and now vice president for student affairs, helped lead those discussions alongside other University leaders. Kathy Bush Hobgood, now senior associate vice president for student affairs and a member of Hallenbeck’s leadership team, was part of that work from planning through implementation. Core Campus became the first major project to emerge from the plan, followed by Douthitt Hills.

A critical partner in the project, Cribb and DesChamps became the new home to the Clemson University Honors College — transforming a living-learning community into a true residential college, bringing students, academic spaces and staff together in one footprint. The Honors Residential College includes 400 beds, gathering and study areas, classrooms and offices — an environment Dean Sarah Winslow calls a differentiator.

Private giving has added another layer of transformation. The Stalnaker Family Study Rooms, James Family Classroom and Warner Family Classroom recognize donors whose gifts strengthen spaces where Honors students study, collaborate and build community.

A decade later, the project’s legacy remains visible: a once-underutilized part of campus is now a crossroads for the Clemson student experience.



688

Beds in Cribb, DesChamps and Gressette residence halls

1,200,320

FY26 meal plan transactions in The Dish at McAlister



Students enjoy meals in The Dish at McAlister and in dining partners in the heart of campus.

SPACES AND PLACES

ENHANCING THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

- Develop spaces and opportunities to support experiential learning and career readiness skill development
- Provide spaces to support a healthier and more resilient student body
- Create strategically planned venues for students to live, learn and play, encouraging lifelong support for Clemson
- Honor Clemson’s history and traditions in new facility and space development

WHAT’S AHEAD

Events that remember sacrifice and strengthen community

Skylar Walder helps students find their place as graduate community director

A premier on-campus residential experience

Transforming Clemson’s recreational footprint for students

▲ **Clemson completed renovations to its signature high-rise residential communities in 2026, highlighting shared courtyard space.**



9,335

Total reservations and events managed by Campus Reservations and Events

8,703

Total student visits to the Military & Veteran Engagement resource centers

REMEMBERING SACRIFICE, STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY

Patriotism is one of Clemson's defining values, and across campus, spaces of remembrance and reflection help bring that value to life. From Memorial Stadium to the Scroll of Honor Memorial, these places become gathering points where students, employees, alumni and the broader community come together to honor service and sacrifice.

Each fall, Clemson hosts a memorial 9/11 Stair Climb while following a timeline of the events of Sept. 11, 2001. Members of Clemson Fire & EMS, the Clemson University Police Department and local fire departments join participants in recognizing the first responders' courage who took action that day.

"The event continues to unite the Clemson community while honoring those impacted by 9/11 and expressing gratitude for the first responders," says Webb Gillespie, president of the Student Veterans Association in 2025.

That same spirit carries into the spring during the Mile of Honor, when several hundred participants walk from the President's Home to the Scroll of Honor Memorial. The route itself becomes a journey of remembrance, culminating with attendees planting an American flag (pictured, right) beside each of the 498 engraved names honoring Clemson men who gave their lives in military service.

Vice President for Student Affairs Doug Hallenbeck describes the Mile of Honor as "one of the true hallmarks of the University and community coming together to honor those that have fallen."

Together, these traditions demonstrate how Clemson's spaces and places do more than preserve history — they create opportunities for the community to experience it. By gathering in places that honor service and sacrifice, Student Affairs helps foster meaningful connections, enriching the Clemson experience through reflection, gratitude and shared remembrance.

"The Mile of Honor is one of the true hallmarks of the University and community coming together to honor those that have fallen."

- VICE PRESIDENT FOR STUDENT AFFAIRS
DOUG HALLENBECK

SKYLAR WALDER

Helping Students Find Their Place

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT – SKYLAR WALDER

Meaningful relationships and supportive communities can shape a student's experience. Skylar Walder affirmed this statement as a graduate community director with Clemson Home the past two years. After supporting more than 500 first-year students her first year, she intentionally sought a larger challenge, overseeing 25 residential community directors and 880 Bridge to Clemson students living in Lightsey Bridge apartments.

"We didn't want these students to feel isolated because they're in the Bridge program," Walder says. "So, we hit the ground running with a bunch of programs designed to ensure they felt connected."

By helping students transition successfully to Clemson while building confidence, independence and career-ready skills, Walder reinforced the spaces and places that make the University special. She balanced her assistantship with an Advancement internship, helping coordinate

presidential events, Give Day activations, the launch of the Fiercely Forward campaign, MUSC Health facility groundbreaking and other milestone campus celebrations.

The classroom and workplace complemented one another. "We were employed by the University, so having that balance as students gave us the ability to practice what life would be like as working professionals," she says. "We were always prioritized as students first."

Walder earned the 2025 Walter T. Cox Graduate Student Award, an honor she describes as validation of others recognizing the care she invested in students and colleagues. This spring, her Clemson journey came full circle when she nominated fellow graduate community director Emily Fisher for the same award.

"I wanted her to exercise creativity while having the support of someone who's been in her shoes," she says. "It was a cherry on top of the year we had together."

▲ Walder (left), is presented with the 2025 Walter T. Cox Graduate Student Award. She graduated with a master's degree from Clemson in May 2026 and now works in housing at the University of Utah.

VALUES IN ACTION

PATRIOTISM



A PREMIER ON-CAMPUS EXPERIENCE

STUDENTS SHOW OFF SPACES AND CREATE MEMORIES

▲ Students make their residential spaces feel like home through personality, connection and community.

Clemson Home held an exciting Best Room on Campus competition in the spring, inviting students to share the spaces that make campus feel like home. Students submitted 96 rooms, suites and apartments across four categories: Style and Expression, Function and Layout, Tiger Pride, and Roommate Goals. Along with photos, participants reflected on how their rooms, roommates, residential communities and living-learning communities have shaped their Clemson Experience.

The response offered a vivid look inside campus life. Students submitted about 500 photos, while Marketing and Communications staff partnered to photograph 16 winning rooms. Twelve community winners — one from each residential community — were selected, along with three overall winners for Best Apartment, Best Suite and Best Room. Winners earned recognition on social media and prizes including Paw Points.

The competition also highlighted a larger story unfolding across the University. Students who live on campus build friendships, develop independence and create memories in communities designed to support learning and belonging. Recent investments continue to strengthen that experience. Renovations to the Bryan Mall high-rises concluded with Lever Hall in the summer of 2026, bringing renewed energy to an area popular among students. Construction also began on 372 additional beds at Douthitt Hills, with completion anticipated in summer 2027.

From a personalized room to a vibrant residential community, Clemson Home is helping students create a place to belong — and an experience they will carry with them long after the day they move out.

7,440

Residential students living on campus

907

Students participated in 14 Living-Learning Communities

THE IMPACT OF GIVING

TRANSFORMING CLEMSON'S RECREATIONAL FOOTPRINT

In 2012, Mike and Janet LoConte stood with then Associate Vice President for Student Affairs George Smith at the top of a hill overlooking 34 acres of scarcely maintained and underutilized space bordering Lake Hartwell. They were asked to envision the footprint as a national model for recreation, competition and leisure spaces — a place that would connect students to each other, and to the Clemson Family.

The LoConte Family's belief in this vision and their financial generosity inspired a host of private donors, including Dave and Lynnette Snow, creating a legacy known today as the Snow Family Outdoor Fitness and Wellness Complex.

Because of their leadership, thousands of Tigers enjoy a No. 1 student experience.

"With deep gratitude, we proudly celebrate a decade of impact," says Vice President for Student Affairs Doug Hallenbeck, who presented the LoContes with a commemorative picture book prior to a Clemson tailgate in Fall 2025 documenting the evolution of the space and impact of their generosity.

Complemented by the Andy Quattlebaum Outdoor Education Center, this student-centered space stretches across acres of lakeside land and includes four state-of-the-art turf fields and opportunities for more development, impacting current and future generations of Clemson students.

"This is a crown jewel on our campus," says Smith. "As we looked at developing the site, we started with a vision of creating a national model for recreation and leisure space. That dream has become a reality."



▲ Thousands of students enjoy intramural sports competition each year at LoConte Family Field, located at the Snow Family Outdoor Fitness and Wellness Complex.

THEN
2014-15

3,986
participated in
Intramural Sports

NOW
2025-26

7,322
participated in
Intramural Sports

LAYING A FOUNDATION

PREPARING FOR POSTGRADUATE SUCCESS

- Teach career readiness competencies to shape students into innovators, problem solvers and critical thinkers
- Enhance experiential learning and leadership opportunities to promote postgraduate success in their homes, communities and careers
- Strengthen Clemson's legacy by preparing students to be transformative leaders in their careers and communities

WHAT'S AHEAD

Fraternity and Sorority Life sets the standard for success

Victor Mattison Jr., a national leader rooted in serving others

Cultivating leadership experiences across campus

Providing students the confidence to lead

Luther Bells, a life built on initiative

Students from the Construction Science and Management program go over blueprints for the Habitat for Humanity build on Bowman Field.



3,390

Students participated in Clemson Leader Day

1,370

Coaching meetings delivered by Fraternity and Sorority Life staff

206

Student programs led by Center for Student Leadership and Engagement staff

VALUES IN ACTION

EXCELLENCE

SETTING THE STANDARD FOR SUCCESS

Fraternity and Sorority Life continues to thrive at Clemson University, where record participation and a strong sense of belonging help students build lifelong connections while preparing for success beyond graduation. This past year, membership grew by an increase of more than 10 percent. Students also achieved a record cumulative GPA of 3.528 during the Spring semester, contributed 93,844 hours of community service and raised more than \$1.7 million for philanthropic causes.

The year also brought national recognition as the Kappa Lambda chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc., became the first in Clemson history — and the first historically Black organization — to earn the North American Interfraternity Conference’s Chapter of Distinction, representing one of just five chapters nationwide. The chapter raised money for the Students

Helping Students Fund to help address student food insecurity while members served in prominent campus and national leadership roles, demonstrating an exceptional commitment to service and community engagement.

A unique partnership continues to expand opportunities for all students. During the Fall semester, 15 students from the ClemsonLIFE (Learning is for Everyone) program joined fraternity and sorority chapters, including three in Kappa Delta — four-time reigning Panhellenic Chapter of the Year.

“Joining one of our organizations can help a student find a connect point at Clemson,” says Assistant Dean of Students and Fraternity and Sorority Life Director Trish Robinson. “Our high retention and graduation rates speak to the sense of belonging and development students get through Fraternity and Sorority Life.”

“Our high retention and graduation rates speak to the sense of belonging and development students get through Fraternity and Sorority Life.”

- TRISH ROBINSON



7,405

Total students affiliated with Fraternity and Sorority Life

3.508

Average GPA of affiliated students

VICTOR MATTISON JR.

Leadership Rooted in Service

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT – VICTOR MATTISON

Victor Mattison Jr. spent his Clemson experience proving that leadership grows through service. As a physics major, he paired academic excellence with an extraordinary commitment to leadership, culminating in his election as Junior Grand Vice Polemarch of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc. In that role, he served as the highest-ranking undergraduate officer in the fraternity nationwide, organizing leadership trainings for regional officers, representing undergraduate members and serving on the organization’s executive committee. Mattison was also one of just 60 undergraduates nationally selected to complete the Undergraduate Leadership Institute and LEAD Kappa Program, earning recognition as a Kappa Fellow.

On campus, he invested in the Clemson community as a CONNECTIONS peer mentor, helping new students navigate their transition to college. He also

was an active member of Blue Key Honor Society — even helping lead one of Clemson’s signature traditions as an emcee for Tigerama in Fall 2025.

Student Affairs played an important role in helping Mattison turn leadership opportunities into lasting preparation for the future. Through programs that fostered mentorship, belonging and personal growth, he honed the confidence, communication skills and servant-leadership mindset that will continue to shape his career. After graduating with a bachelor’s degree in physics in May, Mattison began a master’s program in aerospace engineering at Georgia Tech this fall, carrying forward a foundation built through his unique Clemson experience.

Mattison performs during Tigerama with his fraternity, Kappa Alpha Psi.



Chris Spellman serves as assistant director of student leader development in the Center for Student Leadership and Engagement.

COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

CULTIVATING LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCES ACROSS CAMPUS

Col. Keith Balts, retired, is director of the Leadership Signature Program in the Wilbur O. and Ann Powers College of Business. He is part of the leadership education community of practice.

For years, Chris Spellman has focused on a simple goal: developing future leaders. Drawing on experiences as a graduate assistant and professional staff in the Division of Student Affairs, he recognized leadership development happens across campus — often in ways that aren’t connected. Encouraged by Kate Radford, executive director of the Center for Student Leadership and Engagement, Spellman spent FY26 meeting with faculty and staff to better understand those efforts and create a community of practice centered on leadership education, including programs such as the Certified Student Leader program (photo, lower left).



“I’ve had a desire to prepare the next generation of global leaders,” says Spellman, associate director for leadership education.. “We know leadership development occurs all over campus, so we wanted to understand how different groups approach this critical topic and support those experiences more holistically.” Those conversations revealed more than 100 leadership experiences, spanning academic courses, mentorship opportunities, training programs and hands-on leadership roles. The conversations also laid the foundation for a new community of practice that first convened in Summer 2025.

Spellman established four goals: map leadership efforts across the University, reduce duplication, encourage collaboration and better tell Clemson’s story of student leadership development. “The distinction of this group was having a tangible end goal,” he says. “People wanted to contribute to telling our University’s story of student impact.”

Among the participants was retired U.S. Air Force Col. Keith Balts, director of the Wilbur O. and Ann Powers College of Business Leadership Signature Program.

“Having a local forum will help focus our efforts and provide more frequent, Clemson-specific touchpoints,” Balts says. “Coming together for relationship-building, idea sharing and problem-solving has been beneficial for all involved.”

THE IMPACT OF GIVING

PROVIDING STUDENTS THE CONFIDENCE TO LEAD

Private, unrestricted gifts provide Student Affairs the flexibility to create intentional leadership experiences to prepare students for what comes after graduation. Through programs led by the Center for Student Leadership and Engagement, students practice the skills, self-awareness and sense of responsibility needed to lead in their professions, homes and communities.

Leadership Week, held each February, introduces students to different leadership practices and perspectives while connecting them with campus and community leaders. Grounded in practices of excellence — such as collaboration and personal growth — the week gives students space to learn, reflect and see leadership in action.

Other experiences deepen that learning through connection and service. The ACC Leadership Symposium brings

students together with peers from across the conference for professional development and networking. The nine-week Certified Student Leader program helps students explore values, conflict management, self-care, goal setting and positive change through workshops, campus events and service.

Programs such as Alternative Break, Fall In Day of Service and the MLK Day of Service turn leadership into action. These events connect Tigers with communities and nonprofit partners through meaningful service. These donor-supported opportunities help students build confidence, strengthen relationships and develop habits of leadership they can carry far beyond their time at Clemson.



96.4% students reported growth in two or more Clemson Leader practices of excellence in 2025-26 (N=2,592)

235 Students have completed the Certified Student Leader program since 2022

Senior management major Myers Gaston facilitated a Lunch and Leadership event with Clemson’s academic deans.





“I am grateful to Clemson for the many opportunities it provides to advocate for student voices as we strive toward achieving the No. 1 student experience.”

- LUTHER BELLS

A LIFE BUILT ON INITIATIVE

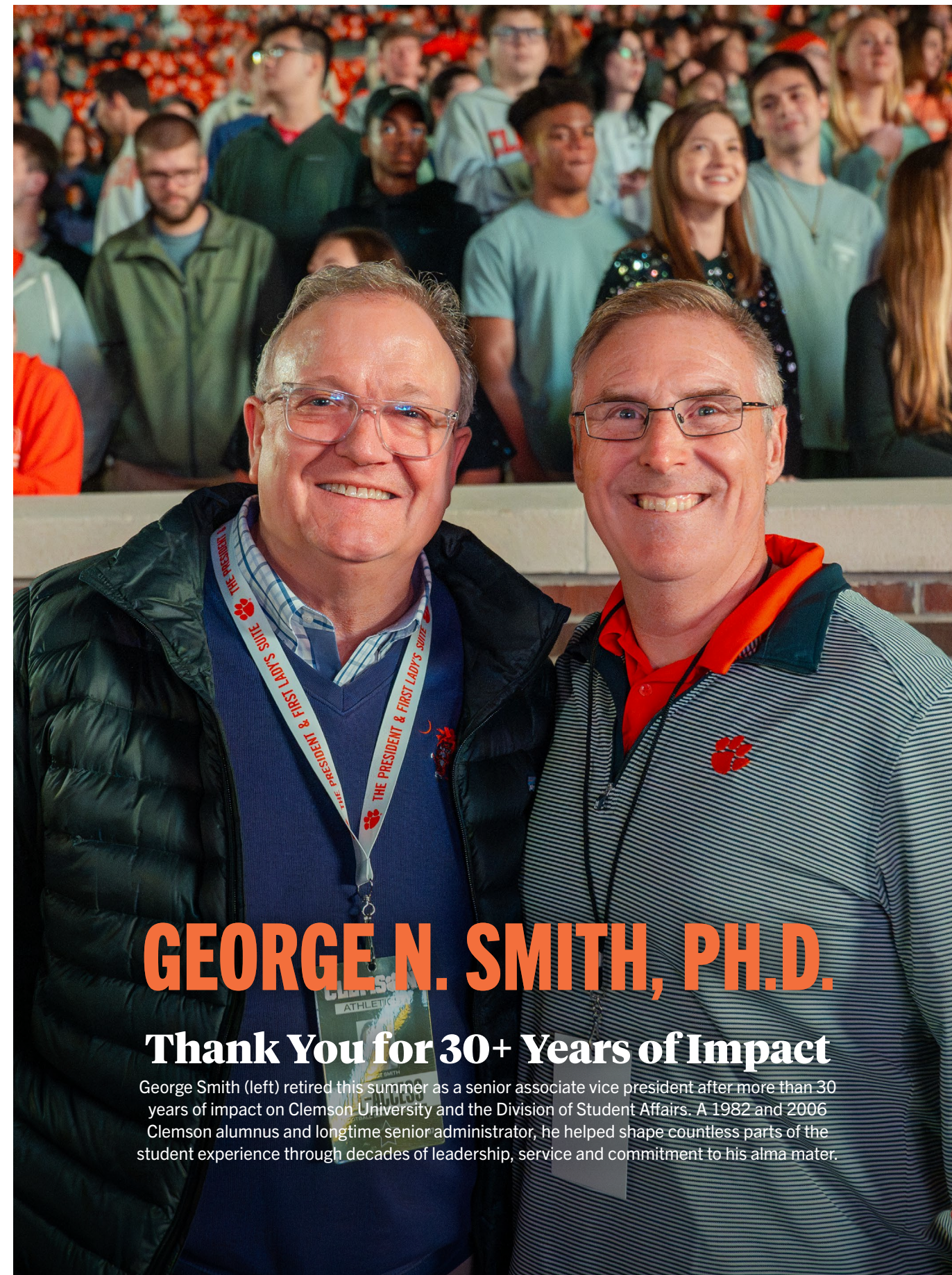
Luther Bells consistently chooses hard work, disciplined leadership and meaningful service in every opportunity he pursues — a true embodiment of self-reliance. A wildlife and fisheries biology major with a Spanish studies minor from Bishopville, South Carolina, Bells has embraced an undergraduate experience defined by initiative and purpose.

Bells is active in Clemson Gospel Choir, MANRRS (Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences) and the Thomas F. Chapman Leadership Scholars Program, while also serving as an inaugural member of the Department of Forestry and Environmental Conservation Student Advisory Board, helping strengthen connections between students and faculty.

His commitment extends beyond campus. Through MANRRS, Bells attended the organization’s 40th Annual Training Conference & Career Expo in Dallas, gaining professional development and networking experience. As vice president of photography for Clemson’s chapter of If You’re Reading This, he helps amplify stories that encourage students to build supportive mental health communities.

Through Creative Inquiry and a Summer 2025 study abroad program in Spain, Bells collaborated with scientists on soil health and sustainable agriculture, while a Fall 2025 co-op with the Nemours Wildlife Foundation immersed him in conservation fieldwork.

Student Affairs has recognized his impact. He was one of five Clemson representatives chosen to attend the 2025 ACC Leadership Symposium. This past spring, he was a recipient of the Frank A. Burtner Scholarship, and was asked to share his experience as a panelist at a Board of Trustees meeting (pictured, left). For Bells, self-reliance means embracing responsibility and creating results that benefit others as well as himself.



GEORGE N. SMITH, PH.D.

Thank You for 30+ Years of Impact

George Smith (left) retired this summer as a senior associate vice president after more than 30 years of impact on Clemson University and the Division of Student Affairs. A 1982 and 2006 Clemson alumnus and longtime senior administrator, he helped shape countless parts of the student experience through decades of leadership, service and commitment to his alma mater.

VALUES IN ACTION

 **SELF-RELIANCE**



THE NO.1 STUDENT EXPERIENCE