

COASTAL

COASTAL CAROLINA UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE



HIGH EXPECTATIONS

President **Michael T. Benson** is primed to take CCU to the next level.



Let's Celebrate

What an amazing time to be a Coastal Carolina University Chanticleer! As I approach my one-year anniversary at CCU, I am reminded daily of the remarkable beauty of our campus. There is nothing better than strolling through Prince Lawn or Blanton Park and visiting with our students, faculty, staff, and visitors – alumni, prospective students and their families, and community members.

I want to thank our board of trustees, President Emeritus David A. DeCenzo, our faculty and staff, and all the others who helped build CCU into the institution we enjoy today. It is through their commitment and hard work that the University is consistently ranked as a Best Value School in the South by U.S. News & World Report. This year, we moved up to No. 5 in the rankings, which is to be celebrated.

Reflecting on 2021, I must acknowledge the collective effort of our students, faculty, and staff during the COVID-19 pandemic. From flexibility in classroom teaching/learning, to wearing masks indoors, and participating in our Vax to the Max incentives programs, I truly appreciate everyone's commitment to keeping our campus as healthy and safe as possible.

And, I would be remiss not to recognize the heart and soul that Dave and Terri DeCenzo poured into this University for nearly 14 years. As you read about them on the following pages, you will no doubt see the immeasurable impact they made on this institution. Please join me in thanking them for their time, dedication, and leadership.

The University is very excited to be celebrating the 20th anniversary of the Thomas W. and Robin W. Edwards College of Humanities and Fine Arts; and the new era of the Spadoni College of Education and Social Sciences is underway.

There is so much to be excited about at CCU, both academically and athletically. The success of the Chanticleer football team continues to bring the University unprecedented national exposure; and the energy in Brooks Stadium throughout the season has been phenomenal.

The forward trajectory of the University will take a tremendous amount of financial resources. I am excited to partner with CCU alumnae Diane Fabiano Sanders '05 and Kelly Moore '05, who are leading our academic and athletic fundraising, respectively. Please reach out to one of us to support the area that most interests you. Your commitment will ensure a strong future for the University and its students.

My wife, Debi, and I, along with our children, are thrilled to be members of Teal Nation. You are sure to see us at any number of campus events. I look forward to meeting many of you on campus and at our regional alumni events as we celebrate all things CCU.

Go Chants!

Michael T. Benson,
President



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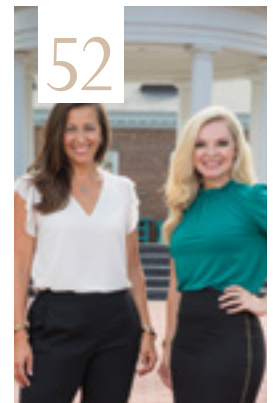
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COASTAL

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About the cover: The artwork was drawn by Pulitzer Prize-winning editorial cartoonist Steve Benson. (see Page 15)



Around Chanticleer Drive

CCU first in S.C. to be recognized for exceptional standards of inclusion



Coastal Carolina University has been recognized for excellence in inclusion for low-income and first-generation college students by Strive for College, which honors colleges and universities that excel in five key areas of distinction. CCU is the first institution in South Carolina to be recognized for meeting exceptional standards of inclusion.

Strive for College, a nonprofit organization, created a set of “Strive Five” distinctions centered on data-based measures of actual performance in areas that demonstrate a tangible commitment to students who are traditionally underrepresented on college campuses.

“Coastal Carolina University is committed to college access and success for our students,” said Atiya Stokes-Brown, CCU’s vice president for diversity, equity, and inclusion, and a professor of political science. “We are excited to partner with Strive for College to increase opportunity and access for students from traditionally underserved communities and resolve to consistently and proactively engage in efforts that facilitate the realization of academic achievements, personal growth, and development for our students.”

The University recently adopted its diversity, equity, and inclusion strategic plan in an effort to increase diversity and affordability, and improve retention and graduation outcomes for all of its students. This plan creates and sustains CCU’s inclusive learning, living, and working environment, where all members of campus feel they are welcomed, respected, valued, and supported.

Students now have 24/7 telehealth access

As part of the University’s ongoing efforts to prioritize the health and well-being of the campus community, CCU students now have free and immediate access to medical and mental health support through TimelyMD, the leading telehealth company specializing in higher education.

CCU has long offered in-person health and counseling services for students as well as prevention and education programs around health and wellness through Student Health Services, Counseling Services, and the LiveWell Office. Like many other colleges and universities, COVID-19 accelerated all of these offices’ efforts to begin offering services via telehealth to meet student needs.

TimelyMD offers students a 24/7 extension of campus health and counseling center resources that is as easy and convenient as making a video or phone call. Through the TimelyCare app on their phone or other device, CCU students can now select from a wide-ranging menu of virtual care options from licensed physicians and counselors in all 50 states – at no cost to them and without the hassle of traditional insurance.



● CCU students have 24/7 access to medical and mental health support through the TimelyCare app on their phones/devices.



Rendering of the Library Learning Complex.

Growth and renovations planned for library facilities

CCU is planning to substantially grow and upgrade its library facilities. The University plans to build a \$29.8 million Library Learning Complex adjacent to Kimbel Library, which will undergo a \$15.5 million renovation of its own. Tentative completion date for the Library Learning Complex is Fall 2023, and Kimbel renovations will begin thereafter with a completion date slated for late 2024.

“I would maintain that at the core of any great institution is a great library,” said CCU President Michael T. Benson. “These projects will help to further improve and invigorate the center of our campus as new and renovated spaces for students to meet, study, collaborate, and learn come to fruition within the next few years.”

According to Melvin Davis, University librarian, the two-story, 64,000-square-foot Library Learning Complex will integrate much-needed student spaces and services with cutting-edge immersive technologies. The first floor will feature a large makerspace, a virtual reality lab, data visualization, and individual studios for video/audio production. It will also feature a large, open study area for collaboration and socialization. Library services such as instruction and research assistance and equipment checkout will be located in the facility. The second floor will house areas such as academic tutoring and student computing services. Additional group study rooms will be located throughout the building.

Kimbel Library renovation plans involve an interior redesign and reconfiguration to include designated space for archives and special collections, overflow group study space, multifunction instruction areas, reading and conference rooms, restroom upgrades, and new paint, carpet, and lighting. The plans also include a new HVAC system, suspended ceilings and associated lighting, and electrical upgrades to accommodate the new building’s features.

Campus arboretum on the horizon

CCU is creating a new on-campus arboretum that is sure to become a cherished spot for the campus community and visitors alike. The 1.5-acre green space will feature a collection of trees that are indigenous to the area. Located at the corner of University Boulevard and Chanticleer Drive East, adjacent to Wheelwright Auditorium, the public garden will provide a space for education, research, and discovery for CCU’s students and faculty.

To sponsor a tree or bench in the CCU Arboretum, please contact Steve Harrison, vice president of auxiliary enterprises, at harrison@coastal.edu or 843.349.6405.



Karen Maguire

Maguire novel published posthumously

Karen Maguire, Ph.D., a former longtime accounting professor in CCU’s E. Craig Wall Sr. College of Business Administration, spent more than five years working on a novel. She completed the writing in 2017 but unexpectedly passed away in July 2018 before it was published. As a tribute to her life, Maguire’s family carried the project forward; *Flanagan’s Fall* was published in May 2021.

Her parents, Bob and Cheryl Maguire, said: “We hope the book brings a warm feeling to your heart, a smile to your face, and some fond memories of knowing Karen.”

Proceeds from the sale of the murder-mystery novel will support the Karen Maguire Memorial Scholarship fund at CCU. Maguire taught at the University from 2004 to 2018.

Filled with unique and interesting characters, *Flanagan’s Fall* is a sweeping tale of how people, very often with the best of intentions, find themselves colliding at the crossroads of self-respect and vengeance.



Around Chanticleer Drive

Brown named dean of College of Graduate and Continuing Studies



J. Lee Brown III

J. Lee Brown III, Ph.D., is the dean of CCU's College of Graduate and Continuing Studies. He oversees all of CCU's graduate programs, and provides leadership of all continuing and community-based credit and non-credit education offered through the University.

Brown came to CCU following a 10-year stint at Fayetteville State

University (FSU) in North Carolina, where he most recently served as interim provost since 2020. He previously served as dean of the Broadwell College of Business and Economics from 2018-2020. His tenure at FSU also included serving as assistant chair of the Department of Management, Marketing, and Entrepreneurship, and as an associate professor of management.

"I am truly honored and excited to be the inaugural dean for the new College of Graduate and Continuing Studies," Brown said. "We will build on Coastal's strong foundation of academic excellence to better meet the educational desires of a diverse, post-traditional student population."

Brown earned a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from North Carolina State University, an MBA from Strayer University, and a Ph.D. in strategy and international business from Old Dominion University.

Koczara named vice president of human resources



Thomas Koczara

Thomas Koczara is CCU's new vice president of human resources and equal opportunity. He previously served as associate vice president of human resources at the University of Wyoming (UW).

"Tom has a proven track record of leading large-scale human resources operations," said CCU President Michael T. Benson.

"With a strong background that includes

both higher education and corporate experience, I believe he is well-prepared to lead our HR initiatives at CCU and to ensure we are a best-practice institution."

"I am thrilled at the opportunity to join the CCU team at such an exciting and pivotal time," Koczara said.

At UW, Koczara led numerous projects and initiatives to improve diversity and inclusion across campus, improve HR processes and services, and create numerous employee-centric actions in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Koczara's background includes serving in HR leadership roles at Roche Tissue Diagnostics, Microsoft Corp., and Toyota Financial Services.

Koczara earned a bachelor's degree in financial administration from Michigan State University and an MBA from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.



Vax to the Max campaign awards scholarships



Week two scholarship winners (from left): Olivia Stringfield, DaShawn McCoy, Eric Cha, and Michael Weaver.

Ensuring the CCU campus community is safeguarded against COVID-19 remains a high priority during the 2021-22 academic year. CCU is in the midst of its Vax to the Max vaccination incentives campaign, which is aimed at getting members of the campus community vaccinated against COVID-19. The University and its partners continue to hold vaccination clinics on campus.

Fully vaccinated students are eligible to win \$2,500 scholarships (40 awarded each semester, with two lucky winners receiving full tuition, room, and board for a semester). Fully vaccinated faculty and staff were eligible to win various prizes during a drawing on Oct. 15.

CCU does not mandate COVID-19 vaccinations for its students, faculty, and staff. The incentives programs are being supported by the University's allotted CARES Act funds. In all, the University plans to award up to \$300,000 in student scholarships.

Visit coastal.edu/vaxincentives to learn more.

Bringing people together

by Yvette Arendt



New projects that showcase the artistic talents of CCU's students include the Teal Alley Mural (left) in downtown Conway and The Cube Galleries placed throughout campus.

One of the primary benefits of public art is that it brings people together. During the last year, partnerships with the city of Conway and across Coastal Carolina University's campus have allowed for the creation of two new public art projects.

In Spring 2021, in collaboration with the city and Conway Downtown Alive, I was able to work with 11 CCU student interns on the Teal Alley Mural in downtown Conway. At more than 3,000 sq. feet, Teal Alley has become a destination for the community. Designing two murals where community members see themselves reflected in the imagery has allowed people to identify with the place and creates a sense of belonging between the city and University.

There are many benefits to communities investing in public art projects, but one of my primary goals is to make art more accessible. This summer, I began The Cube Galleries at the University. This series of satellite, mini galleries are found at five locations on campus, with another one at the Conway Visitor Center. Much like the Free Little Libraries that have popped up in neighborhoods throughout the country, The Cube Galleries create opportunities to bring contemporary art out of the institution and into the daily lives of those on campus and in the community. The Cube Galleries are dedicated to demystifying the gallery space in order to create accessible and shared experiences.

The inaugural exhibition in The Cube Galleries presented the work of Sarah Bouchard '21, who earned a bachelor's degree in visual arts. Her show, titled "Breaking Rank," is a body of work

created using copper, pewter, rivets, and fabrication in the production of six vessels.

Bouchard states, "I create abstract forms that symbolize the disciplined and rigid nature of a military mindset, while simultaneously introducing elegant curves that reinforce a concept of liberation from restraint."

These unique spaces will have rotating exhibitions of student, faculty, and professional artists' work throughout the year.

Public art projects are not possible without the collaboration of many partners. The Cube Galleries project was initially inspired by the Art Viewing Boxes placed in and around Asheville, N.C., during Summer 2020 by artists Jackson Martin, Suzanne Dittenber, and Luke Whitlatch, and the Tiger Strikes Asteroid exhibit location in Greenville, S.C. The Cube Galleries were designed and constructed by CCU carpenter Ronald Hinson, and supported by Rein Mungo, director of facilities planning and management, and the Thomas W. and Robin W. Edwards College of Humanities and Fine Arts.

The intersection of disciplines public art projects create is integral to their lasting success. The Teal Alley Mural and Cube Galleries are the beginning of a larger vision for public artworks on the Coastal Carolina University campus and in the greater community. For more information about Teal Alley or upcoming exhibitions at The Cube Galleries, visit www.coastal.edu/art.

Arendt is an assistant professor of visual arts at CCU.



Five Questions

Carissa Medeiros

Director of Emergency Management



As CCU's director of emergency management, Carissa Medeiros is responsible for activating and managing the University's Emergency Operations Center when severe weather and other natural disasters impact the campus.

I **Why emergency management?**

"My career in emergency management started by chance. I was looking for a job and there was an opening for an assistant with Horry County Emergency Management. I didn't even know what emergency management was 19 years ago. The longer I was there, the more evident it became that this was my calling. Every day I come to work and know that what I do makes a difference in the lives of others. I may not see the results of my work immediately, but I know the effort I put in while we are at a steady state lessens the impact on the community when a disaster strikes. I am grateful for a profession that allows me to lead by serving others. Not everyone can say they love their job, but I can."

II **What brought you to CCU?**

"Greg Weisner [CCU's director of transportation services] reached out to see if I would be interested in working at CCU. He believed a formal emergency management program was necessary due to the rapid growth of the University. My first response was, 'No, thank you.' I loved working for Horry County Emergency Management. However, the challenge of building a program from scratch was extremely attractive. It was only after much prayer I decided to come to CCU. Eight years, six federal disaster declarations, and three additional severe weather Emergency Operations Center (EOC) activations later, it is evident that joining CCU was all a part of God's plan and purpose for my life."

III *In recent years, campus operations have been disrupted by hurricanes, major local flooding, and winter storms. How has the University benefitted from having such strong collaboration with various local and state emergency management agencies?*

“State and local emergency management professionals have realized over the years that Coastal Carolina University is an active partner when preparing for and responding to a disaster. Hurricane Florence is a great example of how the relationships have been reciprocal. During the flood fight, we were notified the food supply trucks would not make the delivery due to the hazardous conditions. I reached out to Randy Webster with Horry County, and after he made a few phone calls, the trucks showed up on campus the next day. S.C. Emergency Management Division (SCEMD) contacted me looking for a site to host the Swift Water Rescue Team of the Texas Task Force 1 Urban Search and Rescue. The University quickly agreed to provide sleeping accommodations along with meals, access to laundry facilities, and movies in the theater. SCEMD knows they can count on CCU to help our community. Any time our area is in the news due to a hurricane, flood, or other severe weather, I receive a message from the Texas Task Force 1 team leader checking in to see how we are doing.”

IV *The COVID-19 pandemic has brought unprecedented challenges to the University. How satisfying is it to see so many members of the campus community work together to address these ongoing challenges?*

“September marked 18 months of the University’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Staff and faculty members who don’t normally serve in the EOC have stepped into expanded emergency response roles for COVID-19. These individuals are not only performing their regular duties, but also meeting frequently and completing COVID-19 specific projects as part of the University’s continued response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The care, dedication, and teamwork demonstrated by these individuals reflects the resiliency of the institution. I am proud to work alongside such professionals. One team, one fight.”

V *What do you enjoy most about working at CCU?*

“The people that make up Teal Nation. I have countless stories of amazing student interns who have made positive impacts to the emergency management program, staff offering to help and go the extra mile, and faculty who are willing to jump in and assist with a project outside of their program. Working with great people who are all in and genuinely care is what creates the environment that our students refer to as ‘feeling like home.’”

About Medeiros

Medeiros earned a bachelor’s degree in English from West Virginia State University and is a National Emergency Management Advanced Academy graduate from FEMA’s Emergency Management Institute in Emmitsburg, Md. She began her career in public service with an internship in West Virginia’s Second Congressional District Office and later worked for West Virginia Gov. Bob Wise. Prior to joining the University in November 2013, she worked for 11 years with Horry County Emergency Management, where she moved up the chain of command to become deputy director. Medeiros and her husband, Michael, have been married for 22 years and have two children: Emily, 17, and Ethan, 15.



Medeiros at a recent on-campus COVID-19 testing clinic.



HIGH EXPECTATIONS

by Jerry Rashid • magazine@coastal.edu



President Michael T. Benson is primed to take CCU to the next level

Michael T. Benson, D.Phil., holds four higher education degrees, the last of which he earned in August 2021 at the age of 56. His curiosity has led him to study a variety of subjects: the history of World War I, the social history of medicine, the mind of Leonardo da Vinci, great books in great contexts, and the history of England from Beowulf to the Battle of Bosworth, to name just a few.

To say he loves to learn would be a vast understatement. He's turned his thirst for knowledge into his life's mission – to help others gain access to and earn their own higher education.

Benson's trajectory to Coastal Carolina University, where he began his tenure as the institution's third president on Jan. 1, 2021, can no doubt be linked to his family roots.

His grandfather, Ezra Taft Benson, was the oldest of 11 children. Raised on a dairy farm in Idaho, he was a first-generation college student. He attended Utah State University, Brigham Young University (BYU) in Utah, and Iowa State University. During his career, he would serve as the 15th U.S. Secretary of Agriculture during both presidential terms of Dwight D. Eisenhower and as the 13th president of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS) from 1985 until his death in 1994.

"There was in our family, what I like to call, a path of expectation put in place by my grandparents," Benson said. "We were expected to come up with the funds, whether it was loans or scholarships, and do all we could to get as much education as possible.

"I have a tremendous amount of appreciation for students who come to Coastal Carolina University with aspirations and realize that education is an amazing tool. It's the most amazing resource we have in the world. Horace Mann [an American educator and early advocate of public education] called education 'the great equalizer.' I've tried to emphasize throughout my entire career that access and affordability are paramount. I would not have been able to go to school had I not had scholarships. So, I hope I'm doing right by my family to have spent my entire career in public higher education and trying to provide access for others."

Benson's parents, Mark and Lela Benson, fell in love while undergraduates at BYU. His dad earned a bachelor's degree in sociology, while his mom, a native of Raymond, Alberta, Canada, never finished college as she devoted her life

to her family, faith, and music. With aspirations of becoming an educational administrator, Mark went on to earn a master's degree in education from Stanford University in 1953. He became the first director of the BYU Adult Education Center in Ogden, Utah.

A gifted orator with a knack for marketing, Mark then followed his innate talents and became a salesman with Rena Ware Distributors. Soon after, he began a successful sales career with Saladmaster Corp. of Dallas, Texas. He would eventually become president of Castlewick Corp., a division of Saladmaster.

Michael Benson, the youngest of six children, was born on Feb. 28, 1965, in Salt Lake City, Utah. Six months later, the family relocated to Dallas, where his dad began working for Saladmaster. During a six-year span, Benson would find himself attending five different elementary schools as the family moved from Texas, to Utah, to Indiana, and back to Texas. The family finally moved back to Utah when he was a sophomore in high school.

"I got accustomed to being in different situations and getting to know people," Benson said. "I really like people. I was raised in a family where there were high expectations. My mother would always quote George Washington Carver, 'Start where you are,

with what you have. Make something of it, and never be satisfied.' That was the standard. They put an emphasis on academics. We were always self-motivated to try and keep up with each other."

An active member of the Utah Music Teachers Association for 30 years, Lela was a talented piano teacher who emphasized to her children the importance of music, culture, and the arts.

"We didn't have much growing up," Benson said. "We never took trips to Disneyland or Disney World. We took occasional trips to Canada to visit my mom's family. Whatever extra money we had was spent on music. We were all required to play an instrument, and it was mandatory to begin on the piano."

Benson is a pianist and drummer. His brother, Steve, a Pulitzer Prize-winning political cartoonist, plays the tuba. Benson touts his sister, Stephanie, as the family's best pianist. Stacey is a violist; Meg is a cellist; and Mary is a flautist.

Mark and Lela's family boasts 34 grandchildren and 38 great-grandchildren.

"When we get together as a family, there's a lot of music, a lot of fun, and a lot of storytelling," Benson said. "Family, faith, and friends are my greatest blessings."

A Student of History

To know Benson is to understand that he has a passion for history. But his curiosity about the past did not happen overnight. He graduated in the top 10 in his class at East High School in Salt Lake City. His sister, Meg, developed the class schedule for his first semester at BYU. It featured chemistry, biology, English, fitness, and American government. Following his first year in college, Benson took two years off to complete an LDS church mission in Italy.

Upon his return to BYU, he still was unsure about which academic field he wanted to pursue. He considered pre-med and took an anatomy class. But there was a slight problem.

"It's not a good sign if you can't remember all of the orifices in the cranium," Benson quipped. "So, I changed to accounting, to economics, and eventually chose political science. I had a double minor in history and English.

"If I had to do it all over again, I would do English literature. I think it was probably in my junior or senior year that I thought history was what I really wanted to do. I tell students all the time, don't fret about changing your major because college is about exploration."

In 1989, Benson's pursuit of knowledge led him to Israel for a six-month study abroad program. His plan for graduate studies was



The artwork adorning President Benson's office includes a photo of former President Dwight D. Eisenhower holding a meeting in the White House Cabinet Room as well as a portrait of former President Harry S. Truman. The cabinet meeting photo includes Benson's grandfather, Ezra Taft Benson, who was the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture during all eight years of Eisenhower's presidency.

to study the religious background of U.S. presidents, ranging from Woodrow Wilson to Ronald Reagan, and how this influenced their attitudes toward the establishment of a Jewish state.

"When I broached that idea with my advisor, Noah Lucas, who was Scottish, he told me in a thick accent, 'Mike, you will be in school your entire life. You have to focus on one president.'" So, he settled on Harry S. Truman, the 33rd president of the U.S.

During his research, Benson learned that Truman had tried his hand at several professions but failed as a clothing salesman, an

“ We didn’t have much growing up... Whatever extra money we had was spent on music.”



oilman, and a cattle rancher. He then ventured into politics and eventually accepted the nomination to be President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s running mate during FDR’s fourth reelection bid. On April 12, 1945, just 82 days after he was sworn in as president, Roosevelt died. Truman then was thrust into the presidency.

Benson, who has several images of Truman hanging on his office walls in the Singleton Building, says one of the traits he admires most about Truman was his honesty.

“He knew what his strengths were; he knew what his weaknesses were,” Benson said. “One of my favorite stories is that when he found out that Roosevelt had died in Georgia, he walked into a room of reporters and said, ‘Boys, I don’t know if you ever pray, but if you do, please pray for me now. When I heard the news yesterday, I felt like the moon, the stars, all the planets had fallen on me.’ That was very sincere. You would not hear a president of the United States say that today. That was a real confession.”

Benson admits that he could talk for hours about Truman and debate the various decisions Truman made that, at the time, were considered very unpopular.

“Over the span of the last several decades, people have realized that whether it was dropping the atomic bombs on Japan, desegregating the military, the Berlin Airlift, the Korean War, the firing of General [Douglas] MacArthur, the recognition of the state of Israel, the establishment of NATO, the establishment of the United Nations, all of those decisions, to some degree, were very controversial. But people have recognized that he was a really gutsy guy, and he wasn’t afraid to make those decisions.

“I often look at my life and think, ‘The Buck Stops Here.’ What would Truman have done in a situation like this? He surrounded himself with people who were much more capable than he was that helped shore up his weak

Benson proudly wore the University Medallion that was presented to him by then-President David. A. DeCenzo, signifying a symbolic transition of University leadership at the December 2020 commencement ceremony.





spots. I try to model a lot of my leadership methods and principles on him. And, he was a wonderful student of history.”

Benson also wrote his doctoral dissertation at Oxford University on the nation’s 33rd president, which was released as a book in 1997. It could be said that Benson’s esteem for Truman is unmatched, thanks to the cooperation of his wife, Debi, whom he married in 2006.

“When we had our first son, I said, ‘Debi, I have always wanted a son named Truman.’ She said, ‘If it means that much to you, let’s do it!’ His name is Truman Taft Benson. He has the best of both parties with that name. He is a constant, daily reminder of Harry Truman.”

Whether it’s helping out at the CHANT411 desk, giving fist bumps, or taking a selfie with students, President Benson is all about connecting with the campus community.

QA

Coastal Magazine recently caught up with Benson in his office in the Singleton Building.

What inspires you every day?

It’s my love of being on a college campus. I have had the opportunity to do other things, but I have always stayed in higher education because I love it. We work in an endeavor that, in my mind, is the one thing that can solve just about every problem we have. The more you invest in education, the more you dispel biases and predispositions and misconceptions, the better off we are going to be as a society.

My life has been immeasurably blessed by my family’s commitment to education, and getting as much of it as possible, and providing as many opportunities for others as possible. I want to allow other people to be just as blessed through education. I am pretty self-motivated, and that comes from our parents excepting a lot from us. We weren’t handed anything. My parents taught us that there is value in every kind



of work. You name it, and I have done it. My first job was mowing lawns. I was a janitor throughout high school. I roofed houses, did construction. Umpired at Little League baseball games. I painted. There are so many people in our society who have different skill sets and abilities, and I really appreciate people who are good at what they do. And it doesn't matter what you do. I was taught to value everyone's role. You are not better than anyone else just because you wear a shirt and tie to work every day. I have enormous respect for everybody who works hard at Coastal.

Prior to your arrival at CCU, you served as the president at three other institutions. How did those positions prepare you for your role at the University?

Wherever I have worked, I have tried to have sincere and profound appreciation for people who make their career at that place. I will probably never be a graduate of Coastal, but it doesn't mean I can't come to love it just as much as everybody who went to school here or works here. I've always tried to come to appreciate the history of the place, the traditions, the people who come here, and the opportunities that it has provided them. And to work as hard as I possibly can to make particularly the alumni proud of their alma mater. I want to make sure that diploma on the wall has even more luster and the reputation of the institution gets kicked up a notch every single year. This is a really fine place with good programs. Every school has its niche. We all can't be Harvard, nor do we need to be. We can all be really good at what we do. My job is to make this the best possible place it can be.

What do you think is CCU's greatest asset?

One of the University's greatest assets that you can't create or replicate is geography. We are in a really nice community in a beautiful setting in a part of the country where everybody wants to come. You can't say that about a lot of places. If you look at the pluses,

Benson's Biography

Michael T. Benson, a veteran of higher education administration, is the third president of Coastal Carolina University. He began his tenure on Jan. 1, 2021, and also holds the title of professor of history.

Experience:

President, Eastern Kentucky University – 2013 to 2020

President, Southern Utah University – 2007 to 2013

President, Snow College – 2001 to 2006

Special Assistant to the President, University of Utah – 1999 to 2001

Education:

The Johns Hopkins University, M.L.A., liberal arts, 2021

University of Notre Dame, M.N.A., cum laude, nonprofit administration, 2011

University of Oxford (St. Antony's College), D.Phil., modern history, 1995

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, visiting graduate student, 1992-93

Brigham Young University, B.A., cum laude, political science, English, and history, 1990

Upcoming Publication:

Gilman at Hopkins: The Birth of the Modern American Research University (Johns Hopkins University Press)

Family:

President Benson and his wife, **Debi**, are the parents of three children: **Truman, Tatum, and Talmage**. He also has two older children from a previous marriage: **Emma**, a BYU graduate, is a TV anchor in Idaho Falls, Idaho; and **Samuel**, a junior majoring in sociology and Spanish at BYU.

Fun Facts:

An accomplished athlete, he played basketball at both BYU and Oxford.

His best marathon time – 2 hours and 41 minutes – won his age division in the St. George (Utah) Marathon, one of the largest marathons in the U.S. He also finished among the top 15% of all registered runners in the 1984 Boston Marathon.



that is at the top of the queue. I really have come to appreciate how much people in our community love this place. In most states, the big schools, the flagship schools, the research schools get a lot of the attention. It's no different here. I am not going to argue about our limitations or concern myself with what those other schools are doing. This is what we have in front of us, and this is what we are going to do. There are so many pluses. We are riding the crest of publicity through our athletic teams that have done well. We have a unique mascot; we have a unique color. We have a great history. And it is a young history. We are coming up on our 75th anniversary. There is so much runway ahead of us.

Where do you plan to take CCU in the coming years?

I have followed four presidents at four different universities. Every president, every person on campus has a role to fulfill. I am tremendously respectful of my predecessors and what they've done. I build on what they have put in place. I appreciate what Dave and Terri DeCenzo have done together for Coastal. My job is to make it immeasurably better.

I like to talk about the **three Rs**. The **reach** of our University, yes, this can apply to our academic programs, but I would also argue this applies to everything. What are we doing as an institution to be engaged, to offer the right mix of programs, whether it's electronically, a hybrid, asynchronous, or face-to-face? The second is **rigor** – is there built-in rigor with the programs that we offer? College is supposed to be difficult. Are we not known as just a great place to go to school next to the beach? The party school reputation doesn't do our students any favors in terms of getting a job. I am all for having a good time within reason. We are here to deliver an education to students. Send them out the door as graduates so they can make an impact and imprint on the world. Third is **reputation**. Once you invest in the reach and the rigor, reputation, I believe, will follow. I want students to say that I am going to CCU because it has this program, or that faculty member, and have you seen the campus? It's safe, it's navigable, and I am not just a number. I believe my job is to build on what is in place and continue to take it forward.



What message would you like to convey to the CCU alumni?

Thank you for what you do for the institution. In many ways, you are the living embodiment of what we are. I always try to thank our alumni, No. 1, for representing their school and doing it so well; and, No. 2, let them know that we want them to stay involved and connected. I always love going back to campus. The flood of memories that come back. You feel like in many ways you have come home. It's where so many people come into adulthood and develop their sense of identity and their intellectual capacity, and their abilities as individuals. When the alumni come back, I want it to be everything they hope for. When they come back, I want them to say, 'Wow, this place is looking even better and better.' Many will say, 'I wish we had this when I was here.' And my response is that this is here today because you were here. You helped put the foundation in place upon which the program, the team, the college, the department continues to make its incremental increase in advancement. We are all a part of the collective effort that pushes the University forward. I would encourage alumni to come back, visit campus, and visit me in my office.



What do you want your followers to know about @michaeltbenson?

I hope people see that I am genuine. What you see is what you get. Academics at times have a sense of self-importance, and that is not healthy. That is not me. My mother used to quote Proverbs 4:7: 'Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore, get wisdom: and with all





Team Benson: President Benson with his wife, Debi, and their three children (from left) Tatum, Truman, and Talmage.

thy getting get understanding.’ We like to walk around in robes at graduation and call each other doctor and president and all that. Titles don’t mean anything to me. My most important titles are that I am a good son, brother, husband, and father. I am a person of faith, and we are here to do a job and do it well. I am no better than anyone else on campus. I believe that we have a really good opportunity before us to push Coastal to that proverbial next level.

Any closing comments?

I hope people recognize how important my family is to me, and having my kids as part of the Coastal Carolina University community. You will see my family at games, events, concerts, and lectures. I hope people see me as not just the president, but they see us as the first family. We are the Chanticleers! ■

President Benson, shown at the Teal Alley Mural in downtown Conway, is the University’s No. 1 cheerleader.



About the Cover

The magazine cover artwork was drawn by Pulitzer Prize-winning editorial cartoonist Steve Benson – the older brother of CCU President Michael T. Benson. He is the political cartoonist at the *Arizona Mirror* and previously worked for nearly four decades at the *Arizona Republic*.

His cartoons are nationally distributed by Creators Syndicate, and have also appeared in *Time*, *Newsweek*, *U.S. News & World Report*, *The New York Times*, and *The Washington Post*, as well as on CNN, MSNBC, ABC’s *Nightline*, CBS’s *60 Minutes*, and PBS’s *MacNeil-Lehrer Report*.

Benson’s cartoons have also earned a National Headliner Award, an Overseas Press Club Citation for Excellence, a Rocky Mountain Emmy, a place in *Who’s Who in the West*, and several Best of the West and Arizona Press Club awards. He is a past president of the Association of American Editorial Cartoonists.

A native of Sacramento, Calif., Benson is a graduate of Brigham Young University, and the author of five books of his editorial cartoons.



Steve Benson



On DeCenzo's Watch

A snapshot of highlights that occurred during **David A. DeCenzo's** nearly 14 years at the helm of CCU.

The academic programs expanded from **39** to more than **94** undergraduate majors; and graduate-level offerings grew from a handful of master's degrees to now feature **27** master's degrees, two educational specialist degrees, and two doctoral programs. The number of full-time faculty grew from **284** to **483**, an **80%** increase.

Enrollment grew to **10,000-plus** students, which reflected a more than **35%** increase from when he took office. DeCenzo made increasing undergraduate minority enrollment a priority; Black student enrollment has grown from **953** to **1,724** students, an **81%** increase; and Hispanic student enrollment has grown from **119** to **549** students, a **361%** increase.

The University experienced a more than **\$300 million** building campaign, the most ambitious construction development in school history. Some of the new facilities, which were constructed with support from a combination of the Horry County Penny Sales Tax for education and bonding sources, included: HTC Student Recreation and Convocation Center; Clay D. Brittain Jr. Hall; Bryan Information Commons; Kenneth E. Swain Hall; Science Annex II; Lib Jackson Student Union expansion; Academic and Office Building II; and the David A. and Theresa M. DeCenzo, Pat Singleton-Young, Chanticleer, and Tradition residence halls. Recent facilities to support Chanticleer Athletics include the Brooks Stadium expansion to **20,000** seats, Springs Brooks Stadium, Boni Belle Hitting and Practice Facility, and the Delan and Lynn Stevens Tennis Complex.

During every year of his presidency, the University's financial audits received clean opinions with no significant deficiencies, material weaknesses, or instances of non-compliance material.





Dr. DeCenzo is a man of integrity. I have known Dave for more than 20 years, and, time after time, he proves that he is the type of person who does the right thing, even when no one is watching. Dave will be remembered as the person who not only had the biggest impact on the long-term direction of CCU, both academically and athletically, but also as someone who led by example and led with courage. The primary consideration in every decision Dave ever made was the students and the cost of their education. It has been an honor serving with Dave! Stacy and I wish him well in retirement and the very best to him, his wife, Teri, and their entire family. No doubt he will be missed.”

—D. Wyatt Henderson '98
CCU trustee from 2009-2021

A LASTING LEGACY

by Jerry Rashid • magazine@coastal.edu

President Emeritus David A. DeCenzo led a remarkable transformation of the University

The introduction was simple yet powerful.

“David A. DeCenzo, the board of trustees has chosen you to serve as the second president of Coastal Carolina University. You will have the privilege and responsibility of leading the University to meet the many challenges of today and of the future. The board of trustees is fully confident that you possess the energy, vision, compassion, commitment, and determination for the many roles you will face as president.”

With that charge, Billy Alford '77, then-chairman of the CCU board of trustees, officially turned the University's leadership reins over to DeCenzo on Sept. 14, 2007.

While delivering his inauguration remarks in Wheelwright Auditorium that day, with the phrase “Dawning of a New Tomorrow” boldly displayed behind him, DeCenzo said: “One tradition that defines our identity has developed in connection with our unique mascot. Just like the Chanticleer from Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, this University is clever and determined and should never be underestimated.”

He says looking back at that moment is always an interesting endeavor.

“But in doing so, I remember the three components of my inaugural speech – tradition, integrity, and excellence,” DeCenzo said. “All three were critically linked and instrumental as foundations for decisions I made during my presidency. Each one was reflective of the University and our actions—not just me as an individual.



David and Terri DeCenzo.

“While I am pleased at what we accomplished, I would have to say that one aspect comes to mind. That was, my desire was to make a degree from CCU more valuable today than it was in 2007. I truly believe we delivered on that goal.”

DeCenzo grew up in Clinton, Md., near Washington, D.C. He earned a bachelor's degree in economics from the University of Maryland at College Park and both a master's degree and a Ph.D. from West Virginia University.

Following a 16-year association with Towson University in Baltimore, DeCenzo's tenure at CCU began on July 1, 2002, when he became dean of the E. Craig Wall Sr. College of Business Administration. Four years later, he was promoted to provost and was instrumental in the establishment of the MBA program.

During his nearly 14-year presidency, which culminated with his retirement in December 2020, DeCenzo masterfully orchestrated the transformation of a regional institution that is now nationally recognized both academically and athletically.

On DeCenzo's Watch

2013 marked the launch of CHANT411, an information service that serves as a central point of contact for students, families, faculty, staff, and visitors who want a question answered or need guidance navigating the University.

CCU's first-ever national championship came on **June 30, 2016**, when the baseball program captured the College World Series title in Omaha, Neb.

On **July 1, 2016**, the University transitioned from the Big South Conference to the Sun Belt Conference, which marked a move up to the Football Bowl Subdivision, the highest level in intercollegiate athletics.

I'M IN – The Endowment Campaign for Coastal Carolina University, the institution's largest-ever fundraising initiative, was launched in **2016** and reached its **\$20 million** Phase I goal two years ahead of schedule.

In **2017**, the first CCU student received the prestigious Fulbright U.S. Student Program Study/Research Grant from the U.S. Department of State and the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board.

CCU earned designation as a Purple Heart University by the Military Order of the Purple Heart in **2017**; and in **2016**, became the only university in the state to install a permanent Missing Man Chair of Honor at one of its facilities.

In **2018**, the University's student-run chapter of Colleges Against Cancer reached the **\$1,000,000** milestone of lifetime funds raised through Relay for Life, which benefits the American Cancer Society.

The Chanticleer football program was ranked in the **AP Top 25** for a majority of the **2020** season and finished the year ranked **No. 14**. Among the season's many highlights were hosting ESPN's iconic "College GameDay" show in Brooks Stadium on **Dec. 5**, and playing in the program's first-ever FBS bowl game on **Dec. 26**.



DeCenzo was inaugurated as CCU's second president on Sept. 14, 2007.



Dr. DeCenzo's mark on CCU is one that will never be forgotten. He ushered the University through a time of tremendous growth and change, making it the nationally-recognized institution that it is today. What resonated the most with me was the way that he not only took time to get to know students, faculty, and staff, but also alumni. When he traveled out of town, he always made an effort to attend alumni events, such as one in the Washington, D.C., area where I had the opportunity to get to know him. He made me even more proud to be an alumna and strengthened my commitment to continue giving back to the institution that gives so much to its student and alumni communities."

– Treda Smith Grayson '99, Ph.D.,
CCU Alumni Association board member since 2014

DeCenzo worked collaboratively with faculty and staff to implement a strategic, comprehensive planning process, encouraged campus-wide assessment, and assured fiscal accountability through policy and practice. Through it all, a top priority of his administration was to be transparent and open. He said, "That was especially true with respect to the financial viability of the institution and my insistency that we have clean audits each year."

Much was accomplished on DeCenzo's watch. CCU's enrollment eclipsed the 10,000-student mark, which reflected a more than 35% increase since he took office in 2007. Successful

fundraising campaigns raised millions of dollars to support student scholarships and academic programs. And, as many Teal Nation alumni who return to their alma mater can attest, one of the most significant changes on campus is the campus itself. Under DeCenzo's leadership, the University experienced a more than \$300 million building campaign, the most ambitious construction development in school history.

While DeCenzo is humbled by the many achievements he helped the University to achieve, he did manage to develop a list of what he considers to be his top eight accomplishments as president, seven of which are University-



(Top) DeCenzo welcomed then-presidential candidate Barack Obama, who spoke on campus during his campaign tour in August 2007. (Bottom) In October 2019, CCU and the South Carolina Technical College System signed a partnership agreement designed to enhance the seamless transfer of students and graduates from the 16 technical colleges in South Carolina to the University. DeCenzo is joined by Marilyn Fore, Ed.D., president of Horry-Georgetown Technical College, and Tim Hardee '78, Ph.D., president of the SCTCS.

specific and one that is personal:

- No. 1 – Signing three of his four children’s diplomas as they graduated from CCU. He said, “That is such a rarity in higher education and something that I truly cherish.”

The other seven – in no particular order:

- Having Col. Bill Baxley put the Presidential medallion on him during his inauguration.
- Supporting his wife, Terri, in the establishment of Women in Philanthropy and Leadership (WIPL).
- Establishing the LIFE (Learning is for Everyone) program, Chant411, and the first Ph.D. program (Marine Science: Coastal and Marine Systems Science).
- Helping to change state law enabling the Horry County Penny Sales Tax initiative.



I had the pleasure of working with Dave DeCenzo during his positions as Wall College of Business dean and provost at Coastal before becoming our president. As chair of the Academic Affairs Committee, Dave and I were in regular contact during his tenure as provost. Looking back, there were a number of small ‘crises’ that made their way to his desk and, eventually, to the committee during that period. I was struck by his total commitment to shared governance between the board and the administration. For me, it set the tone for our relationship and, ultimately, for his success as president.”

–Oran P. Smith
CCU trustee since 1993



HGTC was proud to present Dr. David A. DeCenzo with the Distinguished Patron Award at the 2021 Commencement Ceremony in May. He has been instrumental in establishing seamless paths for students transferring from HGTC to CCU. As president of CCU, he awarded hundreds of thousands of dollars in scholarships for HGTC graduates in the Early College High School program. He worked in unison with HGTC through a mutual aid compact agreement to share resources for students during the COVID-19 pandemic. Through the many years we served our colleges, we worked together in a phenomenal relationship to provide open access to our students – all for their convenience and success. We were proud to have this unique model partnership for our state.”

–Marilyn Murphy Fore, Ed.D.,
president, Horry-Georgetown Technical College



DeCenzo ushered in a new era of Chanticleer Athletics when he announced the University would join the Sun Belt Conference in 2016. As a result, the football program now competes in the Football Bowl Subdivision, the highest level in intercollegiate athletics.



Dave did what he thought was right for the best interest of Coastal long-term, not what may have been easiest or quickest in the moment for him or Coastal. He also understood how important it was for the University’s overall profile to have Chanticleer Athletics perform at a high level, bringing national exposure to the institution.”

—Eugene C. Spivey '91
CCU trustee since 2002

- Witnessing the first ROTC commissioning, and the first Fulbright awarded to one of CCU’s graduates.
- Being recognized as a Military-Friendly and Purple Heart University;
- And, “very importantly,” being recognized for years by *U.S. News & World Report*, *Forbes*, and *Colleges of Distinction*.

As the University continued to evolve, DeCenzo was keenly aware of the impact a strong athletic program could have on campus, as well as the positive exposure it could bring to the University. On July 1, 2016, he oversaw Chanticleer Athletics’ transition from the Big South Conference to the Sun Belt Conference, which marked the University’s move up to the Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS), the highest level in intercollegiate athletics. One day before that major conference

shift, he witnessed Coach Gary Gilmore '80 lead the baseball program to the 2016 College World Series title – the first national title in school history.

“Clearly, universities are about learning and academics,” DeCenzo said. “That is why we significantly grew our academic programs. That is the heart of why we exist. But one cannot overlook what athletics means to an institution. Our accomplishments in athletics have brought CCU media coverage that we simply would not have achieved elsewhere – or been able to afford even if we could.

“I will never forget the excitement and community spirit we saw around our 2016 College World Series national championship; the national exposure we received from ESPN-televised football games and the hosting of ESPN’s ‘College GameDay’ on our campus; nor our first-ever FBS bowl game.



DeCenzo celebrates with students in Brooks Stadium.

Seeing Coastal Carolina University being successful in athletics meant a lot to me as it was one pillar of success to make CCU better known – and attract students to our campus.”

In all, DeCenzo dedicated nearly 20 years of service to Coastal Carolina University, and his legacy is undeniable. For him, as well as for the University, saying farewell will certainly take some time.

“I simply want to say thank you – to the University’s board of trustees for giving me this opportunity to lead CCU for so many years; to the faculty and staff who bought into the vision of what we could become and for making it happen; to state and local leaders who provided us the pathways to move the institution forward; to the broad community and donors who supported us; and the students and their families who recognized what CCU had to offer. Being president of CCU was a dream come true for me and something I will cherish the rest of my life.” ■



I have had the good fortune to know Dr. DeCenzo on a personal and professional level for many years. Not only did he recognize that the University had the potential for growth in all areas, but he also realized the importance of building strong relationships with the communities around the University as well as with Horry-Georgetown Technical College. Coastal Carolina University will be forever blessed by Dr. DeCenzo’s legacy.”

*–Brenda Bethune
mayor, City of Myrtle Beach*



Dr. Dave DeCenzo’s entrance in the Conway community was not to be an ordinary event. As president, he is to be honored for sculpting a credible university the world now knows well.

Even the casual observer knows of CCU’s massive growth in student population, expansive educational opportunities including doctoral programs, and athletic performance (that has put Conway on the map) under Dr. DeCenzo’s leadership. No longer does the history of the ‘Chanticleer’ have to be told.

Because of Dr. Dave DeCenzo’s role at CCU, in Conway, and beyond, we are better, and we are stronger. Thank you, Dave. You will not be forgotten!”

*–Barbara Blain-Bellamy
mayor, City of Conway*



INSPIRING WOMAN

by Jerry Rashid • magazine@coastal.edu

Former CCU first lady Terri DeCenzo champions philanthropy and leadership

With grace and warm-heartedness, Theresa “Terri” DeCenzo became genuinely involved with the ethos of Coastal Carolina University. The former first lady took an active role in issues relating to student government, leadership, intercollegiate athletics, and Greek life, among others. She was instrumental in bringing highly successful women leaders in business, politics, and education to campus to speak and inspire women both within the University and the community.

Her greatest impact on students and the University undoubtedly came through her tireless efforts as the founder and executive director of Women in Philanthropy and Leadership (WIPL). She joined what was then called Women in Philanthropy in 2007, the same year her husband, David A. DeCenzo, Ph.D., became the second president of the University. Shortly thereafter, with

input from faculty, staff, students, and community members, she expanded the organization’s mission to include a leadership component and established WIPL. In 2011, the inaugural Celebration of Inspiring Women and Women’s Leadership Conference was held. The daylong conference featured guest speakers from around the country and grew to attract more than 800 attendees each year.

“I have always been passionate about building others up and recognizing that we often push each other down out of fear or jealousy or some sort of belief that we are not responsible or accountable to our sisters,” DeCenzo said. “WIPL was really a movement in this belief – that if we join together in the commonalities we share, the differences become an asset rather than a detriment; they enrich rather than divide.



In February 2020, DeCenzo and award recipients celebrated the 10-year anniversary of Women in Philanthropy and Leadership's Celebration of Inspiring Women.



It was a passion of mine to bring together like-minded women of diverse backgrounds to share their stories, their hopes, and their dreams. These women shared relevant and important life lessons to inspire and empower others on their journey. It was always striking and humbling for me to see and hear the ordinary struggles we share with extraordinarily successful women.”

–Terri DeCenzo



DeCenzo is flanked by Barbara Pierce Bush (left) and Jenna Bush Hager, who were keynote speakers at WIPL's 2018 Women's Leadership Conference.

“It was a passion of mine to bring together like-minded women of diverse backgrounds to share their stories, their hopes, and their dreams. These women shared relevant and important life lessons to inspire and empower others on their journey. It was always striking and humbling for me to see and hear the ordinary struggles we share with extraordinarily successful women.”

During a surprise announcement at WIPL's 10th annual Celebration of Inspiring Women on Feb. 10, 2020, it was revealed that the Inspiring Woman Award – regularly presented at the event – was renamed the Theresa M. DeCenzo Inspiring Woman Award. Since its inception, the Celebration of Inspiring Women has honored 47 exceptional women whose lives have made a significant impact in South Carolina, the nation, and beyond.

WIPL also is credited with awarding more than 400 students in excess of \$420,000 in financial support through annual awards and a fully endowed scholarship.



The DeCenzo family: (front row, from left) Mark '08, Terri, and Gabriella '14; (back row, from left) David, Meredith '12, and Natalie.



One of my fondest memories would have to be the graduation of my children from CCU – two as undergraduates and one as a graduate student. Seeing their dad give them their degrees is something I will forever cherish. I also remember with great fondness every commencement – the culmination of a student’s purpose. It was a great reminder of our reason for being there.”

– Terri DeCenzo

“I feel extremely grateful that I was placed in a university setting where I could see the need and be a small part of the solution,” she said. “I remain grateful for the board of trustees who supported the programs; the administration, including my husband, who was a great adviser and listener; the staff, who picked up the program and ran with it – if not for them, my vision would have remained a dream. Mostly, I’m amazed and grateful for the generosity of women who care. Their collective impact has changed many lives and created opportunity for students in need.”

Her tireless and impressive work at the University did not go unnoticed. In February 2016, DeCenzo was presented with the Order of the Silver Crescent by then-South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley. The award, one of the state’s highest honors, is given to individuals for significant contributions, leadership, volunteerism, and lifelong influence within a region or

community of South Carolina.

DeCenzo says her single most poignant memory as a member of the CCU community was being a part of her husband’s inauguration: “It allowed for all of the other wonderful memories that followed that day. But mostly, it was the culmination of one of his dreams, and to see that come to fruition is indescribable.”

DeCenzo also took great pride in witnessing Chanticleer Athletics “become a powerhouse.” Key moments included cheering on the football team during its Dec. 7, 2013, upset victory at the University of Montana, dubbed as one of the coldest (-5 degrees at kickoff) FCS playoff football games in NCAA history; watching the baseball team capture the 2016 College World Series national championship; and welcoming ESPN’s “College GameDay” to campus in Fall 2020. “All of these will be fond and great memories to share with our grandchildren.”



In recognition of the DeCenzos' impact on CCU, the board of trustees approved naming one of the University's newer residential facilities the David A. and Theresa M. DeCenzo Hall.

The DeCenzos are the proud parents of four children: Mark '08 (wife Jen), Meredith '12 (husband Ryan), Gabriella '14 (husband Jonah), and Natalie (husband Scott); and have five grandchildren: Mason, Luke, Emmy, Henry, and Ellie.

“One of my fondest memories would have to be the graduation of my children from CCU – two as undergraduates and one as a graduate student,” said DeCenzo, a graduate of St. Joseph Hospital School of Nursing and Towson University, who spent most of her professional career as a critical care nurse. “Seeing their dad give them their degrees is something I will forever cherish. I also remember with great fondness every commencement – the culmination of a student’s purpose. It was a great reminder of our reason for being there.”

While David and Terri DeCenzo’s tenure in office has concluded, they will always be members of Teal Nation. The former first lady reflects on that chapter with great pride and gratitude.

“Once you start to place your thoughts on paper, you realize with great emotion that one of the most wonderful times of your life has ended,” she said. “As I reflect on my shared journey at CCU, I am filled with an overwhelming sense of gratefulness for the richness of the memories; the people, the experiences, the friendships, and the love that took place on this campus and so in our lives. We’ve chosen this community to link arms with forever.” ■





EDWARDS COLLEGE

CCU's home of
the humanities
and fine arts
celebrates
20-year
anniversary

Those who are familiar with Coastal Carolina University understand that growth is pretty much a given, and the Thomas W. and Robin W. Edwards College of Humanities and Fine Arts is no exception.

Since the dedication of the Edwards Building in 2001, the college has indeed grown, not just in the number of majors, students, faculty, and square footage, but in community impact and value, academic rigor and reputation, and student diversity and engagement.

As it celebrates its 20th year, those who have spent the past 20 years (or more) as a part of the college, as well as some newer faces, are perfectly poised to look back – and forward – two decades. People such as Robin Edwards Russell '85, whose parents' names reflect the college's name, and whose life has been impacted by it as a daughter, a student, a teacher, a wife, and a mother.

"As an undergrad in the '80s, who was not a very good student, I became inspired by a faculty member who made me curious about the world and hungry for knowledge," said Russell, who



EVOLUTION

by Caroline P. Rohr '08 • magazine@coastal.edu

serves her alma mater as an associate professor of theatre. “Never in a million years would I have imagined that would have led to my parents becoming philanthropists at Coastal, I would become a professor at Coastal, and I would have a daughter graduate from Coastal. To me, that’s the power of Coastal Carolina University.”

Then there are others such as Pamela Martin and Dan Ennis, who, in 1999, joined the faculty of what was then the School of Humanities and Fine Arts, and whose professional careers were just starting at the time the Edwards College was being born.

At that time, faculty and classes in the humanities and fine arts were spread throughout multiple buildings and spaces on campus. Ennis’ first office in the English department was on the second floor of Kimbel Library; Martin’s as a member of the politics department was in a portable. But they both knew something bigger was coming.

“That next year [2000], all the schools were renamed colleges, and that was a huge deal,” said Ennis, a former dean of the college, who now serves as provost and executive vice president for academic

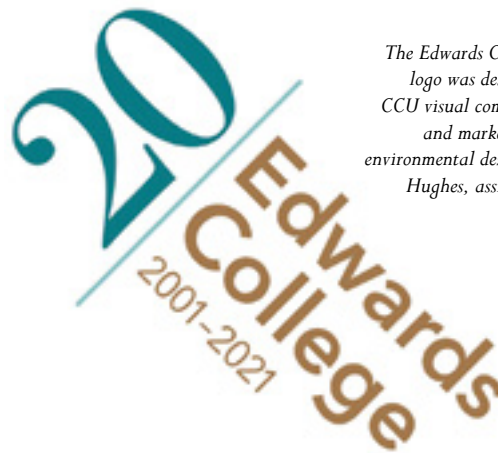




Thomas W. and Robin W. Edwards tour the Edwards Building construction site along with then-President Ronald Ingle.



Lynne Franken, former dean of the Edwards College, speaks during the Edwards Building dedication ceremony on Sept. 21, 2001.



The Edwards College's 20th anniversary logo was designed by Jennifer Bien, a CCU visual communication design major and marketing minor, as part of an environmental design class taught by Leigh Hughes, assistant professor of graphic design.

affairs. “And people talked about the new building for years; you could actually go over and visit as it was being built. At the dedication [in 2001], I remember walking through the building for the first time and into the courtyard; that was such a dramatic moment.”

Martin had a similar experience at the dedication.

“It was amazing, because it was such a beautiful structure, especially the courtyard,” she said. “It was exciting to think that we had this beautiful outdoor space, and a theatre and space for an art gallery and exciting cultural events to combine with all of that.”

The opening of the Edwards Building presented the first time all the departments of the college were mostly housed underneath one roof, and the impact that had on the faculty was immediate and palpable.

“My office was in the same hallway as the theatre department, and that was wonderful,” said Martin. “As a political scientist, I always have to think in terms of rational actions, so it was wonderful to be around creative people who were using their talents in a different way than I did. That building really solidified a community.”

The closeness made it easier for faculty and students of different disciplines to work together, and helped the already blossoming part of Edwards take root that has now become part of its identity: interdisciplinary collaboration.

“I collaborated a lot with the theatre department in those early years,” said Martin. “There was lots of overlay, it seems like, across the different disciplines, a lot of developing interdisciplinary approaches.”

Anyone entering the Edwards Building can see firsthand how bringing the majors together under one roof impacted the atmosphere. Turn one corner, you might hear the sounds of voice or music students rehearsing for a production or recital while another corner takes you down a hallway filled with artwork created by students ... down another hallway, you’ll likely find a student practicing guitar in the stairwell or a group of philosophy students in debate. And, no matter which hallway you walk down, there’s sure to be a bulletin board along it somewhere peppered with flyers and posters touting an upcoming event, club meeting, or student activity. On certain days, you can snag a copy of the student newspaper, *The Chanticleer*, or one of the two student-



“If you walk through Edwards now, it is colonized by specialized spaces. When it opened, you had classrooms and offices and performing spaces. Over the years, classrooms have been turned into teaching spaces, like the Digital Commons, The Athenaeum Press, the forthcoming intel lab.”

—Dan Ennis
CCU provost

produced magazines, *Tempo* and *Archarios*.

Ennis credits Lynne Franken, Edwards College dean from 2001-2004, with laying the groundwork for what Edwards has become.

“She had a big influence on using the arts to center the college,” he said. “She came from a good liberal arts college and kind of established that this is what a humanities college was supposed to do. People now are building on what she started.”

Others who played a key role in the early days of establishing the college included Dan Selwa, John Beard, Wink Prince, Steve Nagle, and Sara Sanders. To both Ennis and Martin, the college seemed to have been built on their shoulders.

“They were sort of the architects of the college,” said Martin. “Their dedication to first-class learning and teaching environments really inspired the rest of us to try and be our best.”

“People would have these big ideas, and John Beard really ground away at the bureaucracy to make the ideas happen,” said Ennis. “Dan Selwa was an excellent chair of politics and geography, and Wink Prince was a good ambassador for the college.”

As the years passed, the college continued to grow, not just in number of students and faculty, but in the number of

programs and spaces, too. The Clay D. Brittain Jr. Hall was completed in December 2012, adding room for the ever-growing communication department and becoming a home in 2014 for the Edgar Dyer Institute for Leadership and Public Policy.

As the growth continued, the spaces changed to accommodate it. “If you walk through Edwards now, it is colonized by specialized spaces,” said Ennis. “When it opened, you had classrooms and offices and performing spaces. Over the years, classrooms have been turned into teaching spaces, like the Digital Commons, The Athenaeum Press, the forthcoming intel lab ... all those additions were saying, ‘We need spaces for students to do real post-graduate work in their areas.’ If you map the progress of the college, the University is really peppered with specific, pre-professional spaces, especially if you add on Brittain Hall and Sands Hall, the band hall, Wheelwright; these are all spaces where students in every major of the Edwards College can really work on their craft.”

Many things have changed inside Edwards as these 20 years have passed, much of it due to the growth, but some of it was a natural response to trend shifts in higher education and what faculty were realizing students needed.



The Edwards College of Humanities and Fine Arts offers its students a variety of hands-on experiences to help them prepare for their future careers.

“A huge change of ethos for the college was this move from the stand-and-deliver classroom style, where the students just take classes and listen to the professor and everything else will just work out, to ‘Now we are going to work on this thing together,’” said Ennis. “It took years, but I can measure by people and square footage the gradual transition of the college from ‘the professor teaches and the students learn’ to much more hands-on, applied, externally focused, educational experiences.”

This experiential learning quality that has become foundational to Edwards is something Claudia Bornholdt, who became dean on June 1, 2019, is excited to build upon, especially since the interdisciplinary studies degree program switched homes in July from the HTC Honors College to the Edwards College.

“The idea is to grow the program significantly; there are already many new incoming students showing interest,” Bornholdt said. “A lot of Edwards’ programs are already interdisciplinary in nature, so students who want to create their degrees can pull from what we already have here by adding minors or a second major.”

It also creates the opportunity for Bornholdt and her team to analyze what programs students are creating for themselves to see if it makes sense to create a new major or minor program in response.

“That is a big part of the future for us,” she said. “We are hoping that we can form a center or institute of interdisciplinary

studies that will house all of the interdisciplinary programs in the college, because this is really the future of higher education. The world is too complex to study just one major and one discipline. So in coming up with solutions for the future, it is really helpful to pull from different areas and to work collaboratively across departments and colleges.”

To Bornholdt, opportunities abound for the Edwards College during the next 20 years, not just within the walls of the building or even across campus, but across the region.

“The theatre opening in Myrtle Beach is a huge opportunity for the growth of our department,” she said. “We are working very closely with Conway, Myrtle Beach, and Georgetown, reinvigorating our communities through art. We can help revitalize certain areas and get students involved in that.”

On campus, Bornholdt hopes to make the Charles Joyner Institute for Gullah and African Diaspora Studies a nationally distinguished institute that draws students from across the country, and to develop professional certification programs for social media, cultural entrepreneurship, production, and arts management. Existing signature programs have great potential to become nationally recognized, such as the theatre, intelligence and security studies, and commercial jazz and music programs, among others.

ROBIN'S REFLECTIONS



Robin Edwards Russell '85 with her parents, Thomas W. and Robin W. Edwards.

Robin Edwards Russell '85 is the daughter of Thomas W. and Robin W. Edwards, the namesakes of the Edwards College, and a member of the college's theatre faculty.

"Teal is the color of our family thread. My mother is proud of that and wouldn't want it any other way. Even though she never attended the University, she feels the sense of community. Coastal is an extension of our family.

"The saddest part of this 20th anniversary celebration is that my dad is not here to see it. He died in April 2001, just a few months before the college's dedication ceremony that September. The other day, I was at my mom's house and came across a copy of the building plans. It made me think about how President [Ron] Ingle would come to the house, and he and my dad would roll out those plans. Or how my dad would go to campus and put on a hard hat and walk around the construction site. He was so involved in everything about the building. He was so proud. He even picked out my office, which is the one I still use today. It's strange, neat, and emotional all at the same time.

"When [then-theatre professor] David Millard gave his remarks during the dedication ceremony, he said: 'Tom, you died too soon. But you would be pleased to know that it turned out well. ... As this building gets formed and shaped by the teachers and students who come here, you and Robin will have fashioned something exceptional and enduring beyond any of us here tonight. We toast Robin and Tom, our friends and benefactors.'"



"We have some excellent signature programs," she said. "I want more people to recognize us for our programs. In the past 20 years, the college has continued to grow when nationally, humanities and fine arts programs are on the decline. We are in a position to continue that growth and gain national recognition. Let's just own it!"

Lest alumni start to worry that the next time they visit campus, the beloved Edwards College will be unrecognizable, there will always be some things that stay the same.

"The University continues with its strong foundation in the liberal arts," said Bornholdt. "This college teaches the majority of the core curriculum; every student comes through this building, and that foundation is really important. We interact with every student."

"The Edwards College is the one place all students pass through on their way to their degree," echoed Ennis. "Even though the college has its own majors and programs, it has never given up its identity as an entry place at the institution. Every student leaves with that Edwards stamp. There's never a doubt that the center of gravity stays there."

And surely, for the next 20 years at least, those who enter the Edwards Building can continue to get lost inside the halls, listening to the music, admiring the artwork, and celebrating the consistent focus on students inside. ■



COASTAL CAROLINA UNIVERSITY ENTERS A NEW ERA

by Kristyn Winch • magazine@coastal.edu

Education college expands to include social sciences and welcomes new dean

*Holley Tankersley, dean of the Spadoni College
of Education and Social Sciences*

The 2021-2022 academic year represents several major changes for one of the six academic colleges at Coastal Carolina University. Holley Tankersley, Ph.D., is the new dean of the recently created Spadoni College of Education and Social Sciences, as departments formerly housed in the Thomas W. and Robin W. Edwards College of Humanities and Fine Arts, Gupta College of Science, and Spadoni College of Education have come together to form the new academic college.

Tankersley, who became dean on July 1, 2021, joined the CCU family in 2006 as an assistant professor of political science. She has since held various positions at the University, including chair of the Department of Politics, associate dean in the Edwards College of Humanities and Fine Arts, and, most recently, as associate provost. Tankersley said deanship seemed like a natural transition, and helping the Spadoni College grow has been exciting.

“There had always been talk about how social sciences were spread out across the various colleges and that there was no real home for them,” she said. “This is at a time when social science disciplines are really exploding in popularity across the country and in higher ed. This opportunity is exciting for me because I get to work with colleagues in education, which is a policy area I studied as part of my master’s degree in public policy, and I also get to see that home for social sciences and bring those two together.”

CCU’s degree offerings in education include early childhood, elementary, and middle level education; special education; physical education; instructional technology; educational leadership; the Master of Arts in Teaching; and a Ph.D. in education. The University’s social sciences degree programs include sociology, political science, anthropology, and geography.

On the education side, one of the college’s most popular majors is early childhood education.

“We’ve had a good relationship with our on-campus Early Childhood Development and Literacy Center, where our students can get great experience with observation and seeing what it means to work in early childhood development and education,” Tankersley said.



For social sciences, sociology is one of the largest and most popular majors. The college is also adding criminal justice as a new major starting in January 2022.

“I imagine that will be pretty popular immediately because we have a lot of local law enforcement officials who don’t have a full bachelor’s degree, and they want that degree for professional development so they can advance in their careers,” she said.

Tankersley is particularly encouraged by the growth of the geography and anthropology majors in social sciences and wants the community to know about these great degree program options.

“Geography is such an applied field, and it is highly interdisciplinary. Our geography department in particular is very focused on technology, GIS mapping, and also human environment geography, on natural resources, and human behavior.

“Students in anthropology are sought after for areas such as cultural resource management, jobs that they can immediately go into the field and work in, applying their skillset rather than specific disciplinary knowledge. That major was added three or four years ago and has grown steadily.”

Within the next few years, the Spadoni College will introduce a new degree in human services, which the dean describes as a “nice nexus between mental health counseling and social services.” She says the program will focus on the kinds of social services that span the human lifecycle, and, in particular, fields such as school counseling and mental health counseling. Human services will be the first new program in the college that is specifically designed with interdisciplinary studies in mind.

“We have such a need locally for this kind of training and degree,” she said. “There’s a dearth of mental health professionals in this area. With our expertise in education, in training, in social services, in public policy, in local government, how can we help to solve this community issue through education but also through partnership?”

Tankersley says collaboration is at the core of the Spadoni College’s restructuring.

“Faculty across these departments were already working together and collaborating on projects, from social justice in schools to issues of sustainable development in education.

Faculty had these partnerships before there was even an announcement that these disciplines were going to be in the same college. And new things like that crop up every day. Part of my job is to understand what’s happening and bring those folks together, which is exciting for me.”

According to Kristal Curry, Ph.D., chair of the college’s Department of Policy, Evaluation, and Research and a member of the Spadoni transitions committee, the fields that make up the new college have in common an overarching goal of community outreach. “These are faculty members and students who are engaged in actively trying to understand the world around them and make a positive impact on their communities at the local, state, and national level. Faculty members in the former Spadoni College of Education have been very excited about welcoming new faculty from the social science disciplines, and are looking forward to a variety of collaborations.”

“
Deanship seemed like a natural transition, and helping the Spadoni College grow has been exciting.
– Holley Tankersley

Social sciences majors in the newly expanded Spadoni College include anthropology, geography, sociology, and political science. (right) The anthropology major gives students many opportunities for hands-on learning.



Carolyn Dillian, Ph.D., has been a professor at CCU since 2010, teaching anthropology and geography. She was recently named associate dean of the Spadoni College, having previously served as chair of her department. Dillian also serves on the transitions committee and looks forward to working together with education and social sciences colleagues.

“I’m most excited to work with faculty and students on the initiatives that bring them into the community,” Dillian said. “This kind of engagement provides chances for experiential and hands-on learning for our students, while also allowing us to work more closely with our Horry County neighbors. I’ve been amazed to learn of everything our faculty and students do, and part of my job is to help support those initiatives.”

Tankersley says community engagement is a priority for all programs within the college, with a focus on “contributing in ways that make this region a place where everyone can be healthy and productive and included. It’s not meant to be thought-work only. We’re going to apply theory to practice in making our communities the best places they can be.”

The dean also is proud of the growth of the Ph.D. in education program, the second Ph.D. program on campus. The college will graduate its first cohort very soon and is proud of its current crop of students.

“Imagine being a student who’s seeking a Ph.D. in education and starting in a brand-new program,” Tankersley said. “You’re the first cohort. The policies and experience are being developed around you. Having this group of students hit this milestone of taking comprehensive exams and moving into dissertation is very special for the program and certainly for those students.”

Many of the students in the Ph.D. program are CCU faculty and staff, Horry County natives, and teachers in the local school systems.

“I am happy to serve that population of students because they are serving our community,” Tankersley said. “They’re teaching, they’re working in our schools, they’re working in our nonprofits. For us, having that population of students in our Ph.D. program is really gratifying because we’re able to give back in that way.”

Taking a class in education can have benefits well beyond the traditional career trajectory.

“I think a lot of times students assume that classroom teaching is the only path for those who study education, and they may think, ‘But I really don’t want to be a teacher.’ But education can take you in a lot of different directions. You could work in education policy. You could work in the nonprofit world. Or you could get into training.”

While teacher preparation is a priority, the Spadoni College team wants students to know that taking an education class is a good thing, even if they have no intention of being a classroom teacher.

Tankersley sees her role as a catalyst for progress in the expanded Spadoni College. She says the job of a dean is to make



Preparing future teachers for the classroom has been a hallmark of the Spadoni College.

room for people to be heard, and to unleash their creativity and their innovation.

“I am a subject matter expert in one thing: political science,” she said. “I am not a subject matter expert in every discipline in this college. No dean in any college could be. But what I know is that the people in those departments are experts, and I just need to make room for them to excel and to create the kinds of programs that are good for students and advance their disciplines. I really think the role of a dean is creating the right environment for people to be successful.”

Tankersley has three goals for the Spadoni College of Education and Social Sciences:

- ◆ **To create a clear brand and identity for the college, so students can identify with its degree programs and people.**
- ◆ **To develop interdisciplinary programs and collaborations on both the teaching and the research side.**
- ◆ **To make sure faculty and staff feel well-supported and have the resources they need to be successful.**

Tankersley is thankful for the support she has received in her new role. “I have been very lucky in the transition because even before the dean search started, there was a college formation committee, which was comprised of representatives from each department, each area that would be a part of the new college,” Tankersley said. “They agreed to stay on to be a transition committee, so they’ve been working on developing policies and procedures and answering the big questions. They have been a great source of advice and institutional knowledge for me. They’ve really done a good deal of the groundwork.”

Tankersley encourages students to keep in touch after their degree programs are completed.

“Alumni, continue to engage with the departments you graduated from. Share advice with students looking to break into a similar field or industry. Help support student opportunities through scholarships or supporting some of our centers and initiatives. Be in touch with us, and let us know what you’re doing and how you’re doing so we can celebrate your successes.” ■



Coastal Carolina University celebrates its largest-ever freshman class (2,519 students) during Fall 2021. The previous high-mark was 2,390 in Fall 2017.

According to Amanda Craddock, associate vice president for enrollment management, the Fall 2021 recruitment and enrollment cycle presented many challenges, as the enrollment staff had to shift to primarily virtual engagement opportunities.

"The team worked diligently to make meaningful connections with prospective students and their families through virtual group and individual meetings, text messages, and a limited campus visit program to share why they should consider Coastal Carolina," Craddock said. "It is gratifying to see that the hard work of the admissions and financial aid staff and our many campus partners paid off as we welcome CCU's largest freshman class."

TOP 5 FRESHMAN MAJORS:



MARINE SCIENCE



MARKETING



PSYCHOLOGY



**EXERCISE AND
SPORT SCIENCE**



BIOLOGY

ENROLLMENT BY THE NUMBERS:



2,519 FRESHMEN ENROLLED
*as of 10/28/2021

 **15,476**
TOTAL APPLICATIONS

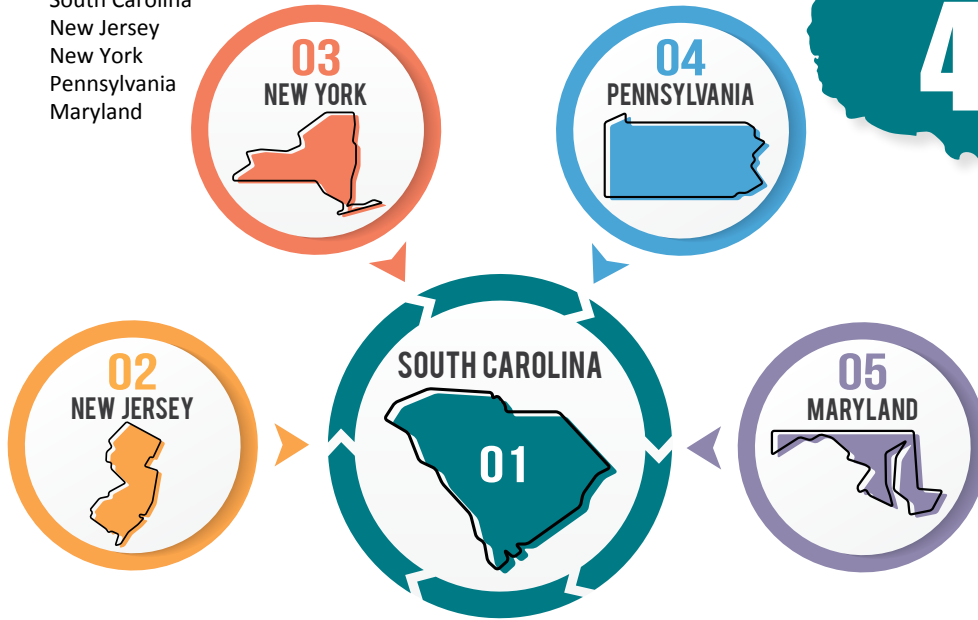
 **79% ACCEPTANCE RATE**

28% MINORITY REPRESENTATION

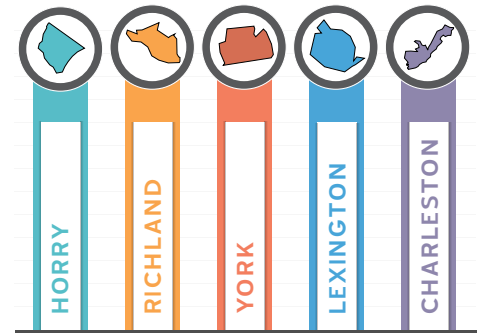
GETTING HERE FROM THERE:

THE TOP STATES:

- South Carolina
- New Jersey
- New York
- Pennsylvania
- Maryland



TOTAL STATES ENROLLED:



TOP SOUTH CAROLINA COUNTIES

HIGH SCHOOL DAYS:



TOP S.C. HIGH SCHOOLS:

- Carolina Forest High School
- Socastee High School
- St. James High School
- North Myrtle Beach High School
- Myrtle Beach High School
- Conway High School

TOP OUT-OF-STATE HIGH SCHOOLS:

- Marshfield High School (MA)
- Jackson Memorial High School (NJ)
- South River High School (MD)
- Toms River High School East (NJ)
- Riverside High School (VA)
- Freedom High School (VA)



HIGHEST GPA: 5.281



HIGHEST SAT: 1490



HIGHEST ACT: 34

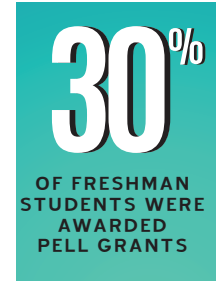
MERIT AWARDS AND HONORS:



153 FRESHMEN ARE IN THE HTC HONORS COLLEGE

MERIT AWARDS:

- Presidential Scholars: 111
- President's Scholars: 186
- Provost's Scholars: 409
- Coastal Scholars: 452
- Teal Scholars: 257
- PGA Golf Management Scholars: 23
- Visual and Performing Arts Scholars: 7



789 FRESHMEN ARE FIRST-GENERATION COLLEGE STUDENTS





CCU SOCIAL

Check Out **LinkedIn**

LinkedIn is the world's largest professional network with 774 million-plus members in more than 200 countries and territories worldwide.

Here is a snapshot of what CCU alumni recently posted on the site.

Isiuwa Oghagbon (She/Her) · 2nd
J.D. Candidate at The George Washington Law School

Last May, I graduated with honors from Coastal Carolina University. I graduated with a BA in Political Science, a 4.0 GPA, completed school in three years, and all while being a Division 1 collegiate athlete. I am so grateful for the opportunities gained and the lessons learned. Blessed to be able to take these lessons into my next stage of education. Now begins my law school journey at the George Washington Law School. Thank you to everyone who has been alongside me from the start!

#classof2020 #classof2024 #graduation #lawschool

Michael Stearns, MAcc · 2nd
CPA Candidate Forensic and Integrity Services Staff at Ernst & Young

I am extremely excited and proud to share that I have completed and graduated with my Masters of Accountancy from Coastal Carolina University.

I have spent the last three years at Coastal Carolina, as now both my bachelor and graduate degrees are Chanticleer degrees. This school has quickly become a huge part of my life, as it has not only helped me discover who I am, but who I want to be in the future.

To all of the professors in the **Wall College of Business**, thank you for the impact that you have had on my life and the support you have provided me over the last few years!

To all of my friends and the relationships that have been formed, thank you! The memories that have been created will never be forgotten!

To my family, thank you for the continued love and support that has been a substantial component for the foundation of my future!

And to **Coastal Carolina University**, thank you for all of the opportunities and memories that have been created! I will forever be a Chanticleer and a member of **#TealNation! #ChantsUp #CINO**


Mikayla Prioleau · 1st
 Alumni Engagement Coordinator at Coastal Carolina University

Words cannot express how thrilled I am to announce that I have accepted a position as the Alumni Engagement Coordinator in the Office of Advancement and Alumni Engagement at Coastal Carolina University!

Check on your people and most importantly TRUST the process. Thank you to everyone for your continuous support and encouragement.

TEAL Nation, I'm Home.

#CCU #Chants Up



Hailey Heimbach, MBA · 2nd
 Marketing and Communications Director - TriCounty Area Chamber of Com...

In the beginning of August, I graduated from Coastal Carolina University with my Masters in Business Administration. These past four years at Coastal have been amazing. From being involved on campus, to meeting amazing people, to professors I'll never forget, and of course life at the beach. But this past year I have gained so much experience from being a graduate assistant in the Wall College of Business, an officer for the American Marketing Association, and being the MBA representative for the Graduate Student Association while also being the treasurer and social media coordinator for the organization. I put my mind to getting a 4.0 gpa for my Masters and I am happy to say I have done that. Now it's time to put my mind to this next chapter of my life. CCU later, Coastal



Smile for the camera!





First-year business students at Coastal Carolina University are encouraged to create their LinkedIn profiles while taking UNIV 110B. According to Brianne Parker, director of student success and transition in the E. Craig Wall Sr. College of Business Administration, focusing on a professional online presence is a hallmark of the class and serves the students well as they seek internships and jobs after graduation.

Photographers in University Marketing and Communication take the students' professional headshots, which students then upload on their LinkedIn profiles, Handshake (an online recruiting platform for students and alumni), and other social media sites to build their professional portfolio. Each student also creates a resume and has it critiqued via the Wall Center for Excellence.

University photographer Scott Dean '06 takes Sebastian Bernard's head shot.



#CCU
[SOCIAL MEDIA]

- @CCUchanticlers 
- /CoastalCarolinaUniversity 
- @CCUchanticlers 
- Coastal Carolina University 



TEAL & BRONZE

COACH GILMORE TO BE INDUCTED

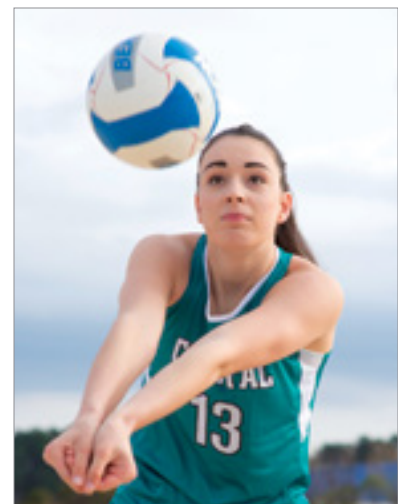
Head baseball coach Gary Gilmore '80 will be one of seven individuals inducted to the American Baseball Coaches Association Hall of Fame in January 2022. He is entering his 27th season at the helm of the Chanticleer baseball program. In 2021, Gilmore recorded his 1,250th career win overall and 1,000th career win at CCU. He ranks 24th all-time in NCAA Division I, with 1,254 career wins, and is fourth among all active coaches.



Gary Gilmore '80

Nemeth nominated for 2021 NCAA Woman of the Year award

Anett Nemeth was nominated by the Sun Belt Conference for the 2021 NCAA Woman of the Year award. She earned a bachelor's degree in business management in May 2021. She recently signed a professional contract with the SC Potsdam in Germany. Nemeth finished her CCU career with 1,145 kills (ranked 10th in school history), a 4.39 kills per set average (ranked second in school history), a .304 attack percentage, 186 set assists, 84 service aces, 599 digs, 199 total blocks, and 1,343.5 total points. Her average of 5.15 points per set also ranks second all-time at CCU. Established in 1991, the NCAA Woman of the Year award recognizes graduating female college athletes who have exhausted their eligibility and distinguished themselves in academics, athletics, service, and leadership throughout their collegiate careers.

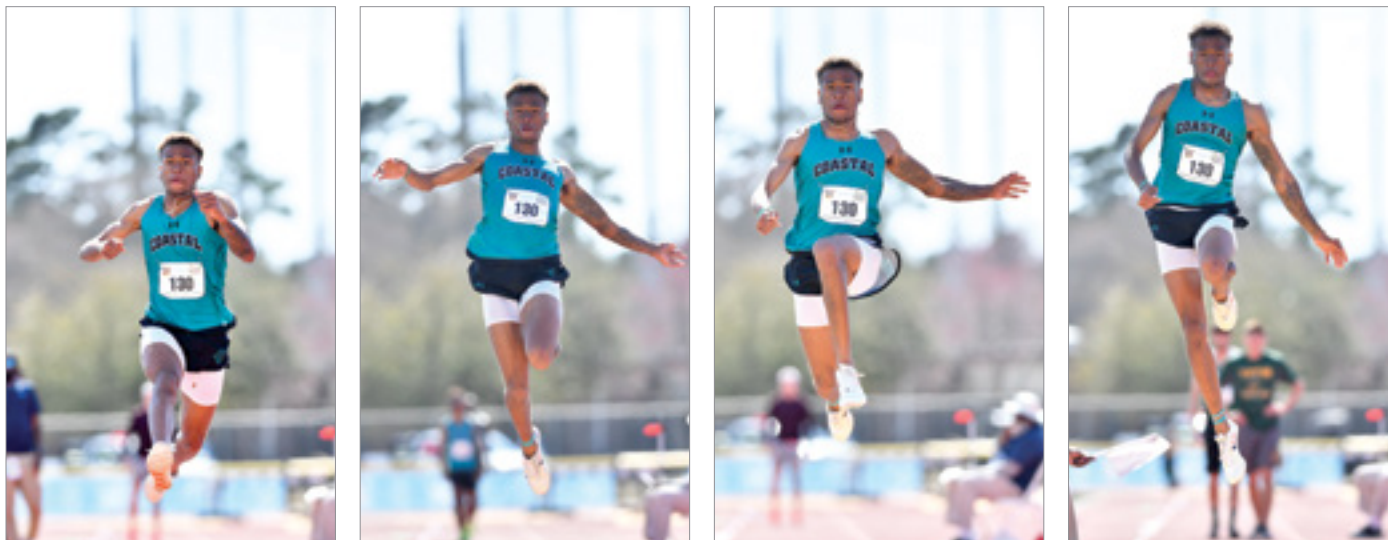


Anett Nemeth



WOMEN'S LACROSSE REJOINS ASUN CONFERENCE

The women's lacrosse program is rejoining the ASUN Conference as an associate member. The Chanticleers, who played last season in the Southern Conference, were previously members of the ASUN from 2017-20. During that time, CCU had a 17-6 ASUN overall record, and was the conference runner-up in both 2017 and 2018. Six schools will compete for the 2022 ASUN championship title: CCU, Delaware State, Jacksonville, Kennesaw State, Liberty, and Stetson.



WISE PARTICIPATES IN 2020 PARALYMPIC GAMES

Dallas Wise, a CCU track and field standout, participated in the 2020 Paralympic Games in Tokyo, where he tied for the silver medal in the men's T47 high jump event with a mark of 2.06 meters. He is the first-ever Chanticleer to compete at the Paralympic Games.



Student-athletes recognized for academic success

Chanticleer Athletics had a total of 238 student-athletes recognized by the Sun Belt Conference for their academic success during the 2020-21 academic year. In all, 142 Chanticleers were named to the SBC Commissioner's List, while 96 other CCU student-athletes earned a spot on the conference's Academic Honor Roll. The Commissioner's List honors student-athletes who earned a 3.50 grade point average (GPA) or better during the 2020-21 academic year, while the Academic Honor Roll honors those student-athletes who maintained a GPA between 3.00 and 3.49 for the academic year.

Murdock receives postgraduate scholarship



Isaac Murdock

Isaac Murdock was one of seven student-athletes selected to receive a 2021 Sun Belt Conference Postgraduate Scholarship. In May 2021, he earned a bachelor's degree in exercise and sport science with a 3.70 grade point average. Murdock, a native of Chapel Hill, N.C., received a \$3,000 scholarship. The three-year letterwinner in track and field plans to pursue a Ph.D. in physical therapy.

MEN'S SOCCER JOINS CONFERENCE USA

The men's soccer program has joined Conference USA as an affiliate member. The conference features Charlotte, Florida International, Florida Atlantic, Marshall, Old Dominion, and Alabama-Birmingham, and affiliate members CCU, Kentucky, and South Carolina.





CLIFF ELLIS: IN ELITE COMPANY

by Jerry Rashid • magazine@coastal.edu

For nearly 50 years, Cliff Ellis has been coaching and mentoring young men while racking up victories on the hardwood court. The 2021-22 campaign marks his 15th season as the head men's basketball coach at CCU, where he boasts an overall record of 264-189.

Prior to being named the Chanticleers' head coach on July 2, 2007, Ellis successfully directed the men's basketball programs at Auburn, Clemson, and South Alabama. He entered the 2021-22 season with 876 career victories, 798 of those as an NCAA Division I coach. Only 124 D-I men's basketball coaches have tallied at least 500 wins in their college coaching career.

"Coach Ellis has compiled one of the most consistently successful careers in the history of the game," said Matt Hogue, CCU's vice president for intercollegiate athletics and University recreation. "Championships at five schools and one of only a few coaches to guide four schools to the NCAA tournament. His longevity and contribution to college basketball speaks for itself."

Ellis is on the brink of becoming just the fourth active D-I coach to reach the 800-win plateau. His impressive coaching success places him among elite company. Duke's Mike Krzyzewski has 1,170 victories; and, only two other active Division I coaches – Jim Boheim of Syracuse (982) and Bob Huggins of West Virginia (900) – have earned 800 wins in their careers.

"We are all friends," Ellis said. "And, we have been at it a long while. We've all played against one



Coach Cliff Ellis is in his 15th season as the Chanticleers' head men's basketball coach.

“
**COACH ELLIS HAS
COMPILED ONE OF
THE MOST CONSISTENTLY
SUCCESSFUL CAREERS
IN THE HISTORY OF
THE GAME.”**

—Matt Hogue
CCU's vice president for intercollegiate
athletics and University recreation

another, and have spent time together in the offseason. For me, I don't get caught up in the numbers. It's a reflection of the people you surround yourself with. The players that you've had, the coaches that you've had.

“To have longevity, you can't be made of plastic. Because plastic breaks. If you are able to last in this game, there is something real about the person. For me, the reality of everything comes down to working hard, committing to the task at hand, and having great people around you. It's an honor to be recognized with those coaches.”

With Ellis at the helm, the Chanticleers have won two Big South tournament championships, advanced to a pair of NCAA tournaments, and played in two CollegeInsider.com and three College Basketball Invitational (CBI) postseason tournaments. The 2009-10 and 2010-11 teams each tallied a single-season school record 28 wins and advanced to the National Invitation Tournament. His CCU win total ranks only behind Russ Bergman's 306 victories that were recorded from 1976-1994.

“Continuity is valuable to a program, and Coach Ellis' impact to our program has provided stable leadership, multiple postseason appearances, record-breaking seasons, and an unwavering

commitment to his student-athletes,” Hogue said.

In 2020-21, which was disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic, Ellis led the Chanticleers to their best season since joining the Sun Belt Conference. The Chants finished 18-8 overall and 9-5 in the conference. For the first time since joining the Sun Belt, CCU played in the conference tournament semifinals before losing 64-61 in overtime to eventual tournament champion, Appalachian State. The Chanticleers finished the season as the runner-up in the 2021 CBI.

“Now that we are in the Sun Belt Conference, we have had to grow as an athletic department,” Ellis said. “When you look at the coaches who have come into our programs, they do it because they love it. It's not about the money; it's about the love of the game. I don't have to do this, but I do it because I love it.”

During his 47-year coaching career, Ellis has guided his squads to 10 NCAA tournaments and 13 National Invitation Tournament bids. His teams have advanced to the NCAA Sweet 16 three times: Clemson (1990) and Auburn (1999 and 2003). And, he is one of only 12 coaches in NCAA Division I history to lead four different institutions to the NCAA tournament and is the only coach to have at least 170 wins at four different D-I programs.



Class Notes

1978

Steve Eargle was recently named associate pastor of Oakwood Baptist Church in Lexington, S.C. A graduate of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, he has served as pastor of several churches in South Carolina and was the executive director of Cherished Children International Adoption Agency.


1982

Norm Evans has moved from Abingdon, Md., to Conway, S.C.

1989

Brad Cunningham was recently appointed to a two-year term on the International Municipal Lawyers Association board of directors. He has been the municipal attorney for Lexington, S.C., for 18 years.

1994

 **Sarah Loudin Thomas'** seventh full-length novel, *The Finder of Forgotten Things*, will be released in December. Her previous novels have won the INSPY Award and the Selah Book of the Year Award, and have been nominated for the Christy Award, Carol Award, and the Christian Book of the Year.

1995

Brian Mitchell is the Myrtle Beach Fire Department battalion chief, where he manages all aspects of the water rescue program. He was recently recognized as a Community Champion by WMBF-TV.

1996

Brent Ham is a regional sales manager for Dentsply Sirona.

Sandy (Mishoe) Shute
(See *Class of 1997*)

1997

Lucy Aplan is a research technologist II at Penn State University's Genomic Core Facility, where she performs Sanger sequencing.

Molly (Brown) and Christman Howard '98 are coauthors in the anthology *The Experts Cure: How Entrepreneurs are Changing the World*. In it, they share about God's goodness through struggles and how He led their family to create Scripture Socks to offer encouragement in a hurting world.

Capt. Greg Shute and his wife, **Sandy (Mishoe '96)**, own iFishMD, a charter fishing business on the Chesapeake Bay in Maryland.

1998

Christman Howard
(See *Class of 1997*)

1999

Betsy Farasey Develle is a child trauma therapist. She lives with her husband and children in South Riding, Va.

Benjamin D. Hill, Ph.D., was promoted to full professor at the University of South Alabama. He serves on the board of directors of the National Academy of Neuropsychology and the executive committee of the Alabama Psychological Association. He also is the editor of the *Journal of Sport Behavior*, consulting editor for *The Clinical Neuropsychologist*, and on the editorial boards of *Applied Neuropsychology: Adult* and *Journal of Attention Disorders*.

Janelle Vanacker was inducted into the Geneseo (Ill.) High School Athletic Hall of Fame on Sept. 4, 2021. A 2020 honoree, she graduated from the school in 1995 and was a four-year starter in volleyball, basketball, and softball. At CCU, she was a four-year letterwinner in women's basketball.

During the 1997-98 season, she led the Chanticleers in scoring (12.3 ppg) and tied for the top spot in rebounding (4.8 rpg), and was named to the Big South Conference All-Academic Team.

2000

Mandy (Stalvey) Carrigan is a paralegal in the Charlotte, N.C., office of Cranfill Sumner LLP.

Laura Weaver is the owner of Glass Bottom Kayak Tours in Myrtle Beach, S.C.

2001

Dwight Williams has been awarded tenure at Kalamazoo College in Michigan, where he is the Roger F. and Harriet G. Varney Associate Professor of Chemistry. In 2019, he was awarded a Fellowship for Excellence in Teaching grant from The Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation and Course Hero. Dwight earned a Ph.D. in organic chemistry from Virginia Commonwealth University in 2007 while researching immunosensor design.

2003

Capt. Michael Campbell has been promoted to captain with the Belmar (N.J.) Police Department, where he began as a patrolman in 2003. He is a graduate of the Burlington County Police Academy.

Ryan Milling is the new principal at H. E. McCracken Middle School in Bluffton, S.C.

Dana Webb is the vice president of finance at LandSouth Construction in Jacksonville, Fla. She manages the operations of the accounting department, and is responsible for payroll, daily cash management, budgeting, and financial reporting.

2004

Tifani Moore is the new development director at the LRADAC Foundation. LRADAC is the designated alcohol and drug abuse authority for South Carolina's Lexington and Richland counties. She previously served as the director of development for South Carolina with the American Diabetes Association.

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[Alumni Profile]

by Kristyn Winch

Angelica Mourges '16 – Helping Haiti

A post-grad mission trip to Haiti the week after earning her diploma from Coastal Carolina University turned into a full-time position for Angelica Mourges '16.

A Connecticut native who studied early childhood education at CCU, Mourges began sponsoring a child from the country during her sophomore year at the University. 2021 marks year six of sponsoring Robensley (Benz for short), who lives in Port au Prince at a children's home.

"Following graduation, I went on a mission trip to meet Benz," Mourges said. "While I was there, I felt a strong calling in my heart, from God, to return to Haiti. I returned later that year to assist with the start-up of a school in an orphanage. This led me to a full-time teaching position at an English Christian school in Port au Prince. My responsibilities there included teaching, coaching volleyball, coordinating activities, and community outreach."

Mourges recently accepted a new position in a rural community in Haiti called Cap Rouge, working as the education/communications director with a nonprofit organization called Life Ansanm ("Together" in Creole). The organization partners with Cap Rouge to assist with the needs of the church, education, job creation/community development, and family care. Her responsibilities have included updating curriculum, recruiting teachers, hosting teacher trainings, and starting an after-school program.

According to Mourges, there are approximately 5,785 people living in Cap Rouge. The most common way people provide for their families is through farming and agriculture.

"The average Haitian has less than five years of primary schooling," Mourges said. "Most Haitian schools are private, and families cannot afford the expensive monthly tuition to keep their children enrolled in secondary schooling. Therefore, almost half of the adult population is illiterate."

Life Ansanm has made education more accessible for families in the country.

"By providing a quality education that families can afford, we are allowing all children to attend school and learn to read," Mourges said. "At Académie Brezou, we make sure all children can attend, regardless of how many children a family has or what their financial situation is like. Investing in these



Angelica Mourges '16 has been working with some of her English class students, writing for the online magazine KidSpirit.

children not only gives them the opportunity to get a job and provide for their families in the future but makes sure they have dreams and helps them to achieve them."

Mourges said her CCU education has allowed her to focus on "helping the whole child learn instead of just advancing them in academics, ensuring that every need of the child is taken care of ... and that goes beyond academically."

Mourges said her favorite part of her job is seeing her students experience joy at school.

"Watching them get to enjoy being kids for a few hours a day, smiling and laughing with friends, makes my heart full. These kids do not have easy lives; they go home and help take care of the house needs and little siblings. They carry a lot of responsibility in the house because it takes everyone working together to survive.

"Haiti is a beautiful country with beautiful people. It has mountains beyond mountains, and the ocean is crystal clear Caribbean blue. The people are caring and have a deep love for Jesus. Unfortunately, that is often not shown on the news. Working and living in Haiti has its challenges, and there are days where the needs of the people become overwhelming. I try to focus on my calling for being in Haiti."

In the wake of the assassination of the Haitian president and devastating earthquakes, resources have been scarcer in Mourges' community. These tragic events had a personal impact on the educator.

"The school I previously worked at in Port au Prince is actually where the president's two children attended," Mourges said. "It hit home knowing those kids are without a father now. Despite what he did or didn't do as the president for the country, he was a great father and husband, and now they have to go on living without him."



Class Notes

2006

Brandon Sessions is the vice president of commercial cybersecurity services at Gray Analytics, a full-service cyber solutions firm based in Huntsville, Ala.

2007

Jessica Edwards Ackerman lives with her husband in Morganton, N.C., where they own Sidetracked Brewing Company. Her grandmother, Ester Edwards, worked at CCU from 1977 to 1992.

Jason Cox is the Horry County Schools district athletic director. He previously served as AD at both Conway and Green Sea Floyds high schools.

Krystin (Mementowski) Dean is the communications specialist at Georgia Family Connection Partnership, an Atlanta-based nonprofit that works toward better outcomes for children, families,

and communities. She previously served the organization as a communications consultant for four years.

Brian Waldron is a board member at Habitat for Humanity of Monmouth County, N.J. He is a senior manager at HFA Certified Public Accountants and Advisors in Lakewood, N.J. Brian and his wife, Alyson, live in Tinton Falls, N.J.

Josh Williams is the associate media director for MediaOne North America, which is headquartered in Atlanta, Ga.

2009

Zack Byrd is an assistant women's golf coach at the University of Mississippi, where he helped lead the Rebels to the 2021 NCAA Division I women's golf title.

Samantha Hicks was promoted to director of financial aid and scholarships at Coastal Carolina University in January 2021. She earned an Ed.D. in February.


Harold Johnson is the new assistant principal at Round Top Elementary School in Blythewood, S.C. He earned a master's degree in educational leadership from the University of South Carolina.

Paul Puccinelli and his wife, Lauren, celebrated their one-year wedding anniversary in August.

Jason Wilkes was named head football coach at Willow Spring High School in Fuquay-Varina, N.C. He previously served as head football coach at Cary (N.C.) High School and was named 2019 Cary Chamber of Commerce Coach of the Year.

2010

Tyler and Kimberlee (Ward '13) Anthony welcomed their second daughter, Adlee Mae, on Dec. 3, 2019.

 **Eugene Bellamy Jr.** was recently promoted to digital platform coordinator at the Jasper County School District in Ridgeland, S.C. He previously served as

principal of Hardeeville-Ridgeland Middle School. In 2019, Eugene and his wife, Raven, welcomed twins, Micah and Malachi, expanding to a family of five.

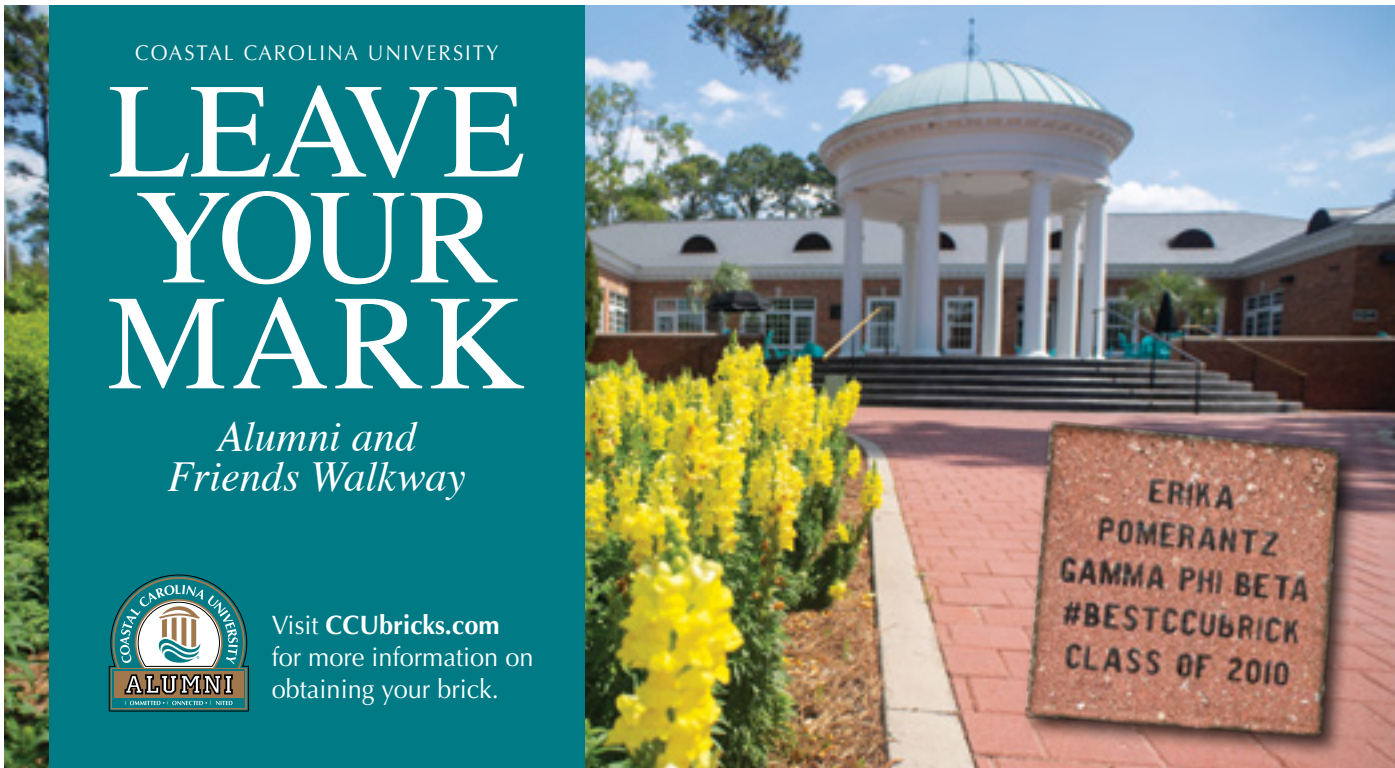
Amanda Elliott Ferrario works in the visitor services division at the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum in Washington, D.C.

ShaNika (Bess) Graham is the author of *I Hate HER: Healing. Evolving. Rebirth.*, which is about a woman's journey of self-discovery and healing. She and her husband, Lonnie, live in Florence, S.C.

Tanner Massey is an assistant basketball coach for the Fraser Valley Bandits of the Canadian Elite Basketball League.

2011


Amanda Loach Bishop is a learning specialist in the Office of Athletic Academic Affairs at the University of Virginia. She previously worked as a student-athlete mentor in the department. Her background also



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ERIKA POMERANTZ
GAMMA PHI BETA
#BESTCCUBRICK
CLASS OF 2010

[Alumni Profile]

by Jerry Rashid

W. L. Davis '21 – Fulfilling a dream

Chasing a dream is not always easy. Just ask W.L. Davis '21.

He grew up in York, S.C., where he was raised by his mother and great-grandparents. His great-grandfather, who lived to be 95-years-old, had an enormous influence on his life. A descendent of slaves without much formal education, he strongly believed that education was key to a better life.

“He would tell me that ‘an education will not remove the hurdles in your life, but it does have the ability to lower them,’” Davis said. “In the '60s, when the state would not provide a bus for rural Black children to carry them to school, he purchased a bus and paid for a driver and gas.”

Davis first attended Coastal Carolina University in 1988, when the school was much smaller and the majority of the students lived off-campus in nearby apartments. He recalls that tuition was approximately \$800 a semester, and the close-knit community of students had to rely on one another to get back and forth to campus.

“In 1988, for someone who was attempting to pay for school and pay for an apartment, that was a tremendous financial burden,” Davis said. “So, after a year-and-a-half, I ran out of money and decided to join the military in hopes of being able to return to Coastal to complete my degree.”

He joined the North Carolina Air National Guard, where he was a member of an air medical evacuation unit that transported wounded soldiers to medical facilities around the world. Following a successful military career, Davis married Liz Henderson, the daughter of Jim and Linda Henderson – former longtime CCU faculty members, began a family, and opened W.L. Davis and Associates, a real estate appraisal business in Charlotte, N.C.

With the responsibilities of helping to raise five children and running his own company, returning to college was not an immediate priority for Davis. He says, “The desire to complete my education never went away, no matter how much success I had in the business world. There was always something tugging on me to complete that journey.”

His daughter, Taylor, graduated from CCU in 2017. While attending her commencement ceremony, the proud father, reflecting on his great-grandfather’s words, vowed to finish



Lathan and
W.L. Davis '21

the journey of earning his college degree. With the help of a military program that supports disabled veterans, he returned to CCU in Fall 2019. Once a week, he’d drive three hours to Myrtle Beach and stay in a hotel for two nights so he could attend classes in person.

“Coastal had grown tremendously, and I felt very uncomfortable the first few weeks sitting in a class with young people. And, I was older than my professors. One of the things that stuck out to me about returning to school was the tremendous advancement in technology. The ability to have all of your textbooks in electronic form was amazing, but I’m kind of old-school and needed a book in hand. I took notes on a legal pad, whereas some of my classmates took notes on a laptop, and that just blew me away.”

Davis is quick to give credit to the University’s professors and support staff, which he says are truly committed to providing a high-quality education to all students – young and old.

“In the military, you are trained to adapt to constantly changing situations and still perform at a high level,” Davis said. “Due to COVID-19, I believe the entire Coastal Carolina faculty displayed that same performance with having to revamp their entire system and still performed at a high level.”

Thirty-three years after the journey began, Davis earned a bachelor’s degree in political science from CCU in May 2021.

“I always knew that I would one day graduate, even if I was 80 years old,” Davis said. “I was determined to complete this task. I hope my journey will inspire someone else and show that they, too, can complete the journey. I am very grateful to Coastal Carolina University. I plan to stay connected with the school and give back to the institution that has given me so much.”


The Davis’ son, Lathan, is a freshman at CCU.



Class Notes

includes teaching social studies in the Aiken County (S.C.) Public School District, and working as a student-athlete tutor and mentor while completing her MAT at CCU in 2013.


Amanda Elliott Ferrario works in the visitor services division at the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum in Washington, D.C.

 **Amy Haggard** was promoted to associate director of alumni and student engagement for the division of undergraduate studies at Florida State University. She is in her second year of the higher education Ph.D. program at FSU.

Carmen Ketron is an urban horticulture agent for Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service, where she serves Darlington and Florence counties. She earned a master's degree in environmental science and a Master of Public Administration from the College of Charleston.

Shannon Klotsko is an assistant professor in the Department of Earth and Ocean Sciences/Center for Marine Science at the University of North Carolina Wilmington.

Brittany LeClair Palmerino joined Andrew Abu Relators in Northborough, Mass., where she now lives. She and her husband are expecting their first child in January.

 **Heather (Peck)** and Adam Tyner welcomed their first child, Owen James Tyner, on Nov. 3, 2019, in Louisville, Colo.

2012

Lauren Haller and **Nick Baldino '14** were married Oct. 4, 2019. They met and fell in love during CCU's annual Greek Week "Mock Rock" dance competition. Lauren was a member of Alpha Xi Delta, and Nick was president of Delta Chi. They live in Atlantic Highlands, N.J.

Anthony Raffa has been promoted to head boys' basketball coach at Wildwood Catholic Academy in North Wildwood, N.J. He ranks as the school's second all-time leading

scorer with 1,893 points. An All-Big South Conference performer for the Chanticleers, he played professionally in Italy, France, Bulgaria, and Iran.

Jacob Scheuer, a physical education and Teacher Cadet teacher at St. James High School, was named Horry County Schools' 2022 Teacher of the Year. He also is the head coach for boys' track and field and an assistant football coach.

2013

Karen Altman has been promoted to marketing director for the ERG Family of Companies, including ERG Payroll & HR, Guhroo, and Grow!

Kimberlee (Ward) Anthony
(See Class of 2010)

Alexander Campbell is the senior vice president of transformation at Bank of New York Mellon in Pittsburgh, Penn. He and his wife, Hannah, welcomed their second child, Tommie Joseph (T.J.), on July 6, 2020.

Drew Clayton is the assistant golf professional at The Summit Club in Armonk, N.Y. He lives in Stamford, Conn.

Julie Hamer-Garrison owns Busydaydreams, where she creates a diverse range of work, from ceramics and jewelry to whimsical miniatures. She also teaches classes at the Greenville (S.C.) Center for Creative Arts.

Keith Smith was sworn in as a new police officer with the Barnegat (N.J.) Police Department on Sept. 8, 2021. He most recently served for six years as a Galloway Twp. (N.J.) police officer.

2014

Nick Baldino
(See Class of 2012)

Kaci Bassett and Maj. Jacob Novick were married on June 24, 2021, in Hood River, Ore. They live in Gig Harbor, Wash., and she works at Central Kitsap Middle School in Silverdale, Wash.

Mackenzie Hadley-Theobald earned a master's degree in counseling and development from Winthrop University in 2018 and is a national board-certified counselor. She is a school counselor at St. James Intermediate in Myrtle Beach.

Shaquille Hilton is the head football coach at Eau Claire High School in Columbia, S.C. He previously served as the linebackers coach and head wrestling coach at West Ashley High School.

Stephen Rodgers is an assistant men's basketball coach at Newberry College in South Carolina. He most recently was a graduate assistant at Florida State University.

2015

Emilye (Rybarczyk) and **Ryan Faust '16** welcomed their first son, Nolan, on Feb. 13, 2021.

Kiana Quolas is an assistant softball coach at East Carolina University. She most recently served as an assistant coach for three years at George Washington University. A former two-time Big South Conference Pitcher of the Year, Kiana earned a master's degree in gerontology from Youngstown State University in 2017.

Jordan Ratti has been promoted to senior coordinator for video production in the athletic department at Tennessee Tech University. She previously served as a video production coordinator for five years. As a student at CCU, Jordan worked as a production assistant for the Chanticleer athletic video department, where she created content for ChantVision and BigSouthSports.com.

Nick Vogel is the executive chef at The Restaurant at Baron's Cove in Sag Harbor, N.Y.

2016

Ryan Faust
(See Class of 2015)

Camrynn Gonzales was recently named an academic coaching specialist in the Coastal Student Success Center at CCU. She joined the University's Office of Admissions and Merit Awards in 2017.

Beverly Greene was promoted to assistant principal at South Florence High School. She previously served as an interventionist at Dewey L. Carter Elementary School.

Kristen Kibblehouse is the community engagement manager for the Atlantic White Shark Conservancy in Chatham, Mass.

2017

Michaela Broyles is a marketing and communications associate at JSSA, a nonprofit based in the Washington metropolitan area. She previously worked in communications at the Brookings Institution in Washington, D.C., and as a news reporter for *The Sun News* in Myrtle Beach, S.C.

James C. Gately passed the Certified Quality Auditor examination of the American Society for Quality.

Karlie Larrimore is the Johnsonville, S.C., branch manager of Carolina Trust Federal Credit Union.

Theresa (Calabrese) Marchi is the director of marketing for Sperry CGA – Griffin Partners in Greenville, S.C., which offers professional commercial and investment real estate services.

Jennifer Sheprow has been promoted to senior accountant in the Charleston, S.C., office of Moore Beuston & Woodham LLP. She earned a master's degree in accountancy from CCU in 2018.



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2018

Mickey Beach is a volunteer assistant baseball coach at Longwood University in Farmville, Va. He spent the last five years at CCU working as a graduate assistant and student manager with the Chanticleer baseball program.

Shannon Johnsen started her own health insurance company, Shannon's Simple Health Insurance Solutions.

Kris Kodys is the head golf professional at The Country Club of Hilton Head. He and Jordan Kent were married June 26 at The Cooper House in Myrtle Beach, S.C.

Taylor McLamb is a marketing associate at STORY, a Greenville-based digital marketing company serving the Southeast. She previously worked as a teacher at Florence One Schools and owned her own small business, The Organized Co. LLC. Taylor earned a bachelor's degree from Francis Marion University.

Thomas Scheffler recently received a U.S. patent for his advances in

the development of augmented reality (AR) devices. His new patent is a dynamic image marker that can be used with AR. It is designed for image target tracking, where a program is continuously looking for an image it recognizes to trigger an AR experience. His invention allows a single image target to become multiple image targets within a single device. Thomas lives in Myrtle Beach, S.C., with his wife and two sons.

Camren Schildt is the head baseball coach at Waccamaw High School in Pawleys Island, S.C. He previously was the junior varsity head coach for two years and the varsity hitting coach for one year.

2019


Shannon (Morgan) Burroughs is the owner of Shannon's Craft Barn, where she produces pillows, seat cushions, cornhole bags, and other items.

Malik Greene is an artist in Columbia, S.C. His exhibit, *Baby Boy: Paintings by Malik Greene*, was showcased at the city's Stormwater

Studios in July.

Jeremy McDonald is an assistant baseball coach at Florence-Darlington Technical College. A native of Chicago, Ill., he works with the Stingers' pitching staff. His coaching background includes serving as an analytics assistant with the Chanticleer baseball program, where he developed and managed several databases to help organize statistics. He also created video packages for the coaching staff and players. Jeremy and his wife, Erin, have two children.

Tyler O'Dell is an assistant softball coach at Gardner-Webb University. He previously coached at Independence Community College in Kansas and Appalachian State University in N.C. While attending CCU, he was a student manager of the Chanticleer softball program for two years.

 **Victoria Smith** lives in Charleston, S.C., where she is a realtor at Handsome Properties Inc. She serves downtown Charleston and surrounding areas.

2020

Eden Alon is pursuing a Master of Arts in Communication, Technology, and Society at Clemson University. His research interests include semiotics, feminism, and rhetoric.

Dylan Kernehan has self-published *Seasons of the St. Lawrence*, a poetry and photography book about the St. Lawrence River.

Michelle Rashid is the multimedia specialist at the University of South Carolina Darla Moore School of Business.

2021

Bryce Ross is pursuing a Master of Arts in Communication, Technology, and Society at Clemson University. His research interests include critical theory, gender theory, and communication activism.

CCU ALUMNI have a long and proud history of embracing their entrepreneurial spirit.

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Interested in having your business included on the directory? Please email alumni@coastal.edu.

coastal.edu/alumni/alumniownedbusinesses



Sean Farawell '11 is co-owner of MeeMom's, a local's breakfast spot with three locations in New Jersey. Their creative take on breakfast and lunch classics range from satisfying sandwiches to savory French Toast. He and his wife **Lauren (Dickey) '11** truly enjoy representing TEALnation in the area!



mееmoms.com



Bryce Facemyer, Heather Vaught '11



CHANTS AT THE BEACH

The Grand Strand Brewing Company, owned by Sean Kobos '10, welcomed CCU alumni and friends for a social gathering on Aug. 12.



Kelly Moore '05, Sean Kobos '10, Diane Sanders '05

Georgette Timmons '04, Krystin Dean '07



Shannon Stone '00, Pam Stone '87, Susan Clark '88, Tom Gwyer '98



Travis Worthy '11, Brant Branham



Brandy Cloos Robertson '14, Julie Brooks '15, Matthew Tyler '14, Alexis Barnhill '16

CCU TEALGATING



Tyrone McKinney '17, Tracy Keller, Harry Titus '16, Aleya Tyliniski



Lauren Mazurkiewicz, Jude, Diane Danes



Antwon Trice '10, Jamal Kinlaw '02

CCU AT THE GAME

Tealgating prior to Chanticleer home football games attracts a large number of alumni and friends to campus.

Jerran Devlin '13, Greg DeHart, Melissa Deskins, Courtney Grambley '12, Evan Woodbury



Angela Ecton, Dena Ward, Kathy Rabune

Lauren Anderson with Cooper, Susan Clark '88, Emerson, Kyle Clark





GIVING

Advancing Coastal

Alumnae Diane Fabiano Sanders '05 and Kelly Moore '05 are powering CCU's fundraising efforts

by Jerry Rashid • magazine@coastal.edu



Diane Fabiano Sanders (left) and Kelly Moore on the Alumni and Friends Walkway leading to the Clark and Marcia Parker Atheneum Hall Alumni Center.

Coastal Carolina University's very own Diane Fabiano Sanders '05 and Kelly Moore '05 are leading the two primary fundraising arms at their alma mater. Sanders is the interim vice president for advancement and alumni engagement, and Moore is the executive director of the Chanticleer Athletic Foundation (CAF). Together, they are collaborating to create meaningful relationships with the University's alumni and friends in a way that encourages an evolution of giving, whether it be through philanthropic partnerships, volunteering time or experience, or advocating for Teal Nation all over the world.

Sanders has worked at the University for more than 14 years.

She most recently was the executive director of alumni relations for two-and-a-half years.

"I am so grateful for the opportunity to step into this new role and oversee the Office for Advancement and Alumni Engagement," said Sanders, who earned a bachelor's degree in musical theatre. "As a proud CCU alumna, and now having made my career here during the past 15 years, I have been able to watch the leaders before me work to make this University grow and flourish into what it is today."

In her new role that began in June 2021, Sanders is responsible for all functions of the Office for Advancement and Alumni



Moore pauses for a selfie with Marissa Scavilla Trice '08 and Patrick Brochu '08.



Sanders connects with Kris Laidlaw (left) and Dane McFarlin '07 at an alumni and friends Tealgate in Blanton Park.

Engagement, which include cultivating relationships with alumni and donors, community engagement, overseeing all academic fundraising and the annual giving program, and leading the 38,000-plus member alumni association and its activities, including planning all on- and off-campus alumni events.

“When I look to the future, I feel a huge responsibility in being a part of this new generation that has the honor to make a difference and really take Coastal to the next level,” Sanders said. “Nothing brings me greater joy than bringing my children to campus for games and events and watching them get caught up in the magic of this place and what it means to be a Chanticleer. I hope to share that same magic with others so that they will see the impact that their gifts can make on the future generations of Chanticleers to come.”

Sanders’ fundraising background includes serving as the director for philanthropy for the Thomas W. and Robin W. Edwards College of Humanities and Fine Arts and as the director of annual giving. Sanders also has served her alma mater as the program coordinator in the Office of Alumni Engagement and held various positions in the Office of Admissions and Merit Awards.

A native of Red Bank, N.J., Sanders lives in Myrtle Beach with her husband, Aarron, and their two sons, Dylan and Ethan.

The CAF is a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization that provides fiduciary responsibility for all donations given in support of Chanticleer Athletics.

Moore was promoted in February 2021 after serving the CAF as a director of development since July 2016. During that time, she was instrumental in securing the \$1.5 million naming rights gift for the Marrio and Josh Norman Field House and played a key role in the design, opening, and management of the West Zone premium suite at Brooks Stadium, including the sales and marketing plan.

“It had been a dream come true to be able to continue to serve Coastal Carolina University and Chanticleer Athletics

in this new role,” Moore said. “I am excited to be a part of the continued growth of Teal Nation and to have the opportunity to make an impact on the future of CCU and in the lives of our student-athletes. It is my strong desire to unite and empower our past, present, and future leaders under the same goal of solidifying CCU as a national powerhouse both athletically and academically. I feel extremely honored to work with such a strong and devoted administration that understands the need to grow and connect our membership.

“Coastal Carolina University has meant so much to so many people; lifelong friendships are started here; marriages are formed here; and memories are made here. I wake up every morning and think to myself, ‘Wow, I get to work with future leaders, meet with donors and community members, cheer on the Chanticleers, and wear teal!’”

Moore also has spearheaded the ever-popular Chanticleer Gala annual fundraiser; increased membership of the Student Chanticleer Athletic Foundation; and created, implemented, and supervised the CAF Ambassador program, an internship in conjunction with the University’s Recreation and Sport Management program. The program provides students with experiential learning by supporting the donor experience and helping to facilitate donor events.

Moore serves on the CCU Staff Senate and is the Sun Belt Conference representative for the National Association of Athletic Development Directors.

Prior to joining the CAF, Moore was the coordinator of spirit and promotions, and head cheerleading coach at James Madison University (JMU). After graduating from CCU in 2005, she served as CCU’s marketing and sponsorship assistant, on-field hostess, and head cheerleading coach.

Moore earned a bachelor’s degree in physical education with an emphasis in recreation and sport management at CCU, where she also was a captain of the cheerleading team. She earned a master’s degree in sport and recreation leadership from JMU.



Managing Technology

by Jerry Rashid • magazine@coastal.edu

Sunny Gupta '92, namesake of the Gupta College of Science, leads one of the fastest-growing SaaS companies

For Sunny Gupta '92, the decision to attend what is now Coastal Carolina University was driven solely by economics. The Chandigarh, India, native applied to a handful of universities in the United States, but only CCU offered him an academic scholarship. To help ease the financial burden even more, Robert Robinson, a former philosophy professor at the University, kindly provided Gupta a place to stay at his home in Aynor during his freshman year. The computer science major arrived on campus in Fall 1989 with \$2,000 in his pocket, thankful for the opportunity to further his education.

Today, Gupta is the cofounder and CEO of Apptio, one of the fastest-growing software as a service (SaaS) companies. It builds advanced data and analytics applications that help technology leaders analyze and plan their technology spending so they can invest in products that increase the speed of business and deliver innovation. Founded as a startup technology company in 2007, Apptio is headquartered in Bellevue, Wash., with an additional 15 offices around the world.

“We offer CIOs and CFOs a series of software applications that help companies manage their technology budgets, spending, and benchmarking,” Gupta said. “Technology is pervasive. The world is going more and more digital. Everything is delivered by technology. It’s very, very hard for organizations of all sizes to understand what they spend on technology, how they optimize the spend, and how to plan better. That is what our software does.”

According to Gupta, there is \$3.6 trillion spent worldwide annually on technology. He believes that spend amount will increase to \$6 trillion in the coming years. Apptio manages about \$650 billion of technology expenses and has recently expanded its international footprint in places such as Japan, Asia, Europe, and India.

Gupta, who lives with his wife, Prerna, and two kids in Kirkland, Wash., says Apptio went public in the Nasdaq market with approximately \$550 million in capital in 2016. In January 2019, he led the company to its acquisition by Vista Equity Partners for approximately \$2 billion. The deal was the largest IT private equity takeover in the U.S. that year and ranked 12th among all buyouts, according to PitchBook data.



Sunny Gupta '92

“It’s been an incredible ride,” Gupta said. “Our first stock was valued at .00001 cent. We exited the business at \$38 a share. It’s been a great story.”

Gupta’s remarkable journey can be traced back to when the institution was known as the University of South Carolina-Coastal Carolina College. He had the opportunity to work in the computer science lab and the chancellor’s office; and he even served as a resident adviser his second year and was the president of the International Club.

He fondly recalls working for Ronald Eaglin, Ph.D., who served as chancellor from 1985 to 1992, and his administrative assistant, Nila Hutchinson. “It was a dream come true for me to be able to work for the chancellor. I worked in the office all three years, and felt like a part of their family. I remember driving

Dr. Eaglin and members of the board of directors to Gamecock football games in Columbia. I used to get free tickets to the games. That is an awesome memory.”

Gupta’s experience in the classroom was just as memorable. He earned all A’s and just one C+ in a psychology class, and says, “That one class still haunts me to this day.” Subjects he enjoyed the most included world history, the Civil Rights Movement, philosophy, and, of course, computer science. One of his favorite professors was Sara Sanders, who taught English. He credits her for sharpening his writing and research skills.

“My education at CCU was a huge stepping stone for me,” Gupta says. “The University gave me a broad liberal arts education that included computer science, math, philosophy, and English. After graduating from Coastal and going into the real world, you are competing with people with degrees from schools such as Duke, Pennsylvania, and Stanford. The first five to 10 years of my career, I used to feel intimidated because most people were not familiar with USC-Coastal. There was something special about that; it gave me more motivation. I feel proud to represent Coastal, and I hope to make the University proud.”

Indeed, he has. Prior to founding Apptio, Gupta was executive vice president of products at Opware, responsible for all product businesses until Opware’s acquisition by HP in 2007. He was also the cofounder and CEO of iConclude, which pioneered the IT runbook automation market through its acquisition by Opware.

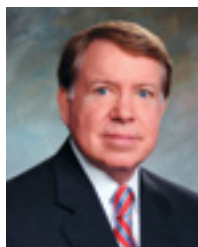
He previously held senior leadership positions in products, business development, and engineering at Mercury Interactive, Rational Software, and IBM.

In addition to his professional success, Gupta is financially giving back to his alma mater. In July 2019, he made a major donation to the University’s College of Science. The gift, one of the largest ever received by the University, provides financial resources and student scholarship support for the college. In recognition of his generosity, the college was renamed the Gupta College of Science.

“I could have never envisioned this for myself and my family,” Gupta said. “I am grateful and humbled. A lot of great people helped me along with the way. More importantly, I am still focused on the fact that my work is not done. I am very dedicated to scaling Apptio as a business for the next three to five years. We really believe our best days are ahead of us.

“Education is very important to me. I want to provide resources to my alma mater and support Coastal students who want to work hard but may not have the financial resources to earn an education like I did. I received a lot of scholarship support from Coastal. If I didn’t have that option, I would not be where I am today. Apptio’s second largest office is in Raleigh, N.C., so we hope to attract a lot of great Coastal students who are looking for job opportunities.”

Gift establishes Leonard Service Scholars program



Donald D. Leonard

CCU students have long been known to contribute their time and talents to community service initiatives, and a new scholarship program will now reward those efforts. Myrtle Beach resident and real estate developer Donald D. Leonard is donating \$15,000 each year to establish and support the Leonard Service Scholars program, which will formally recognize students who are dedicated to serving their communities.

“Don Leonard’s commitment to Coastal Carolina University, our students, and community service is to be highly commended,” said CCU President Michael T. Benson. “Serving others must remain at the forefront of what we do as a society. The Leonard Service Scholars program is a wonderful way to recognize our students for their exemplary community service efforts. The University is grateful for Don’s generosity, thoughtfulness, and support of our students.”

The Leonard Service Scholars program will be administered by CCU’s Spadoni College of Education and Social Sciences. There will be four scholarships for each of the freshman, sophomore, and junior classes. Each class of scholars will be comprised of 12 students, with each student receiving a \$1,000 scholarship.

“As we honor our athletes and give special recognition to our scholars, we also need to recognize our students who devote so much time and energy to community service,” Leonard said. “When I realized that Coastal Carolina did not have a way to reward the many students volunteering in our surrounding communities, I wanted to develop a program to let them know how much we appreciate their service.”

Leonard is president of Leonard, Call & Associates Inc. He is a Life Trustee at Wake Forest University, where he received the 2011 Distinguished Alumni Award, and served on the Deacon Club board of directors. In 1997, he received the Order of the Palmetto for public service, South Carolina’s highest civilian honor.



Moglia makes generous gift to the University

Former Chanticleer head football coach Joe Moglia has made a generous gift to Coastal Carolina University. The contribution allows design work to begin on an indoor practice facility, expanded football facilities, and a proposed Brooks Stadium south endzone project. His gift will also complete the funding for a new stadium for the men’s and women’s soccer programs.

“This is a significant step forward for our athletics program at Coastal Carolina University and indicative of Coach Moglia’s commitment to our student-athletes and our institution,” said CCU President Michael T. Benson. “We truly appreciate Joe’s past, present, and future leadership at Coastal Carolina University and his advocacy of our students. In recognition of his continued support, the soon-to-be-designed academic and athletic facility will be named The Joe Moglia Center.”

While Moglia stepped down from full-time coaching in 2018, he still serves the University as chair of athletics, executive director of football, and executive advisor to the president.

“In 2012, [then] President David DeCenzo offered me the opportunity to be the head football coach at Coastal Carolina, when no other athletic director or university president in this country was willing to give me a chance,” Moglia said. “Under the leadership of Coach Jamey Chadwell and President Michael Benson, I couldn’t be more excited about the future of our football program and the incredible prospects for our entire University. I’m very proud to be a small part of it.”

With Moglia’s gift, the new soccer facility now has the funds needed to complete the project. All the requisite state approvals have been secured; design work and construction will begin immediately with an anticipated completion date in time for the 2023 season. The new soccer venue will be located on CCU’s East Campus, where it will join the existing Delan and



Lynn Stevens Tennis Complex and the Beach Volleyball Complex. With future plans for relocating the track and field facility to that area as well, the location will become a full complex for serving the University’s Olympic sports.

During his first five years as CCU’s head coach, Moglia led the Chanticleers to the FCS national playoffs each year and to conference championships in four of the seasons. CCU rose to an FCS No. 1 ranking in both the 2014 and 2015 seasons – a first in program history. Moglia, who tallied a 56-22 overall record at CCU, received the Eddie Robinson National Coach of the Year Award and was inducted into the Vince Lombardi Hall of Fame.

Moglia, a former chairman and CEO of TD Ameritrade, has been honored by the National Italian American Foundation, the Irish Arts Center, the American Institute for Stuttering, and the Stuttering Association for the Young. He also has received the Ellis Island Medal of Honor, and is the only author who has written books published on both investing and football.

Top photo: In recognition of his donation to the University, former CCU head football coach Joe Moglia (second from left) was presented a souvenir game ball during the Chanticleers’ football game versus Kansas on Sept. 10. Making the presentation were President Michael T. Benson; Delan Stevens ’79, CCU board chairman; President Emeritus David A. DeCenzo; and Matt Hogue, vice president of intercollegiate athletics and University recreation.

Rendering of the proposed football indoor practice facility.



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cultural arts premium events Spring 2022



DENNIS MCNETT EXHIBIT FEB. 24

Dennis McNett graduated from Pratt Institute with an MFA degree in 2004 and taught there until 2012. He has shown nationally and internationally, and has been interviewed and featured by *The New York Times*, *Juxtapoz Magazine*, NPR, and other notable sources. McNett has also contributed as a visiting artist/lecturer at more than 30 universities, colleges, and art centers. His work has filled the window displays of Barney's in New York City, been displayed on dozens of Antihero skateboards, and can be found on murals/streets in places such as New York City, Philadelphia, and Richmond, Va.



THAT GOLDEN GIRLS SHOW MARCH 2

'That Golden Girls Show!' parodies classic *Golden Girls* moments – with puppets! Get set for an evening of cheesecake, laughter, Jazzercise, shoulder pads, sex, and the elegant art of the quick-witted put down. The show features Sophia's get-rich-quick schemes, Rose's tales from St. Olaf, Blanche's hunt for men and the Fountain of Youth, and Dorothy's daily struggle to make sense of her life and keep her roommates in check. Devoted fans will fondly remember our four girls from Miami, and for the first-timers, this will be a joyful introduction to the brilliance of that television series.



ETIENNE CHARLES APRIL 20

Etienne Charles is associate professor of jazz trumpet at Michigan State University in East Lansing. Hailed by *The New York Times* as "an auteur" and by *Jazz Times* as "a daring improviser who delivers with heart-wrenching lyricism," Charles has earned critical acclaim for his exciting performances, thrilling compositions, and knack for connecting with audiences worldwide. According to *Downbeat Magazine*, "Charles delivers his ebullient improvisations with the elegance of a world-class ballet dancer."

Visit coastal.edu/cultural-arts for more information. For tickets, go to tickets.coastal.edu.

Our House: *The Chanticleers hosted their first-ever Power 5 opponent when the Kansas Jayhawks visited Brooks Stadium on Friday, Sept. 10. Coastal Carolina won the "White Out" game 49-22 in front of a record-setting home crowd of 17,697 spectators.*



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