



SAVE THE DATE!

An Evening With

General Colin Powell

The 7th Annual Dr. John B. Edmunds, Jr. Distinguished Lecture Series will feature retired four-star U.S. Army General and American politician Colin L. Powell.

Thursday, March 19, 2020

G.B. Hodge Center USC Upstate

Tickets will be available beginning January 15. Details will be posted at uscupstate.edu.

Gen. Colin Powell served as secretary of state under President George W. Bush. Prior to that role, he was chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff for both President George H.W. Bush and President Bill Clinton, and was national security advisor for President Ronald Reagan.



About the Edmunds Distinguished Lecture Series

In its seventh year, the Dr. John B. Edmunds, Jr. Distinguished Lecture Series is dedicated to bringing significant scholars and leaders in history, political science, philosophy and religion to the University of South Carolina Upstate and the Upstate community. The series is a program of the Department of History, Political Science, Philosophy and American Studies at USC Upstate.

For sponsorship opportunities, please contact University Advancement at 864.503.5234



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UP Magazine

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A magazine for alumni and friends of the University of South Carolina Upstate

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Community and corporate partnerships are integral to our ability to deliver on our promise to students and employers.



Letter from THE CHANCELLOR

I hope you have found this fall to be as energizing and full of promise as I have. It's a particularly beautiful season on campus, and I always enjoy watching our students take full advantage of the thoughtfully planned environments our teams have created here. If you haven't been inside the Library lately, do plan a visit. The energy is palpable - and catching.

As I read through this newest issue of UP Magazine, I am reminded of just how many students have studied here - well over 30,000 now - and how many of them are living and working in the Upstate today. This issue is packed with stories of our graduates who have gone on to work for the region's top employers. They're doing incredible work at companies like Dräxlmaier, EP+Co., and Hubbell Lighting.

As the largest public regional comprehensive university in the Upstate, we play a critical role in developing the next generation of globally competitive workers by providing an accessible, rigorous, career-relevant education that meets the needs of both students and

industry. When we do this well, it helps our regional economy thrive, and leaders are born.

USC Upstate is a major engine of talent development, with an annual economic impact of more than half a billion dollars. We currently are working to adapt our business model to the changing landscape of higher education. Community and corporate partnerships are integral to our ability to deliver on our promise to students and employers.

As a regional comprehensive, we have unique opportunities to develop curriculum in direct response to employer need. When we recently welcomed Dr. Shirleatha Lee as dean of our Mary Black School of Nursing, we did so having conducted a national search with partners at Spartanburg Regional Hospital. A very large percentage of the hospital's nurses are graduates of USC Upstate. The hospital's input was invaluable in identifying a dean we know will train our students for today and tomorrow, ensuring that we meet the needs and expectations for talent that our partners require.



This fall we launched a master's degree in Business Analytics at the George Dean Johnson, Jr. College of Business and Economics—the first graduate program of its kind in South Carolina. We quickly enrolled 18 students, many of whom are already employed by companies who understand the predictive potential of data analysis to improve financial performance, strategic management and operational efficiency. Again, by partnering with industry leaders, we have developed a program we know will allow students and employers to succeed.

USC Upstate recently partnered with all seven of the Spartanburg County School Districts to create an online M.Ed. in Applied Learning and Instruction that enables teachers in the classroom to pursue an advanced degree online. To date, more than 350 Upstate teachers are enrolled in the program, with support from district leaders who understand how advanced training will ensure that the region's youngest students will be better prepared for college.

To ensure our future, we must constantly assess need, providing our

students with core competencies and soft skills, like communication, critical thinking and adaptability. We must provide students with study abroad programs, internships and on-campus employment in support of their career objectives. And, we must continue to partner with the region's most successful employers to prepare students who will thrive in the increasingly internationally diverse economy that exists in the Upstate region of South Carolina.

As chancellor, I am fortunate to work with a group of talented faculty and staff who believe, as I do, that our mission is truly meaningful. We serve this region in ways only a university like ours can. We serve our communities, the companies and organizations that make them strong, and those who will come to lead them.

Best wishes,

Pronder P. Kelly, Ph. D

Brendan B. Kelly, Ph.D. Chancellor

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USC Upstate Ranked No. 1 by National Publications

The University of South Carolina
Upstate is No. 1 among Southern
Regional Public Colleges, according to



rankings released this fall by *U.S. News* and *World Report.*Additionally, in the list of Best Regional Colleges, USC Upstate was 11th among all Southern Regional Colleges, which also includes private institutions. *Washington*

Monthly Magazine recently released rankings that showed USC Upstate is the best baccalaureate college in South Carolina and No. 9 (out of 216) on its list of the nation's top undergraduate institutions. And in its 2019-20 Almanac, The Chronicle of Higher Education recognized USC Upstate as having the seventh-highest enrollment among public baccalaureate institutions nationwide, based on 2017 data from the U.S. Department of Education.

"As the largest public, regional comprehensive university in the

Upstate, USC Upstate plays a critical role in providing excellent, career-relevant education to the citizens of this region," said Chancellor Brendan Kelly. "These rankings are significant recognition of USC Upstate's impact."

The publications employ various criteria to develop the rankings. *U.S. News and World Report* rankings, for example, are calculated based on up to 16 statistical measures of academic quality, including retention and graduation rates, social mobility, faculty resources, alumni giving, and admissions data.

7th highest

Seventh-highest among public baccalaureate institutions nationwide in percentage of women who enroll and graduate in computer science-related fields, according to The Chronicle of Higher Education.

One Rhodes
Scholar and
six Fulbright
Scholars.



Ranked No. 1 among Southern Regional Public Colleges by U.S. News and World Report.



Ranked No. 1 in South Carolina (ninth in the nation) on the list of the Best Baccalaureate Colleges in the U.S. by Washington Monthly magazine.



No. 4 among the South's Best Colleges for veterans, according to U.S. News and World Report.

Named to *Money* magazine's 2019 list of the 500 Best Colleges For Your Money.

Employs more than 900 people.

Economic Impact

Contributes more than \$506 million annually to the state's economy, according to a study by USC's Darla Moore School of Business.

About 30,000 Alumni, many of whom live and work in South Carolina

A major source of talent for the region, USC Upstate has more than **6,300** students and produces about **1,300** new graduates per year.

Member of the Big South Conference; 17 Division I teams; 250 student-athletes



Daniela Isaza, center, a USC Upstate junior and a criminal justice major, was introduced to the S.C. Supreme Court justices during their session on campus Oct. 30. From left, Justices George C. James Jr., Kaye G. Hearne, Chief Justice Donald W. Beatty, John W. Kittredge and John Cannon Few.

Court Convenes on Campus

In a rare departure from their chambers in Columbia, the South Carolina Supreme Court gathered on campus in October to hear oral arguments for a series of actual cases. The court is led by Chief Justice Don Beatty, a Spartanburg native. The visit was part of an initiative to increase the visibility and accessibility of the state's judicial branch.

"The court's visit was an amazing opportunity for our university community and Upstate residents to observe their state judiciary live and in person," said Chancellor Brendan Kelly. "It was an honor to host this historic event."

Former U.S. Ambassador **Visits USC Upstate**

USC Upstate welcomed former U.S. Ambassador Vicki Latham Huddleston to campus this fall. Huddleston delivered a lecture titled, "The Decline in Diplomacy and the Rise of Terrorism in Africa: Implications for Economic Development, Migration, Peace and Security."

Huddleston is a retired senior foreign service officer who recently published the memoir, "Our Woman in Havana: A Diplomat's Chronicle of America's Long Struggle With Castro's Cuba."

During her 30-year career, Huddleston worked for the U.S. Department of State, the U.S. Agency for International Development, and the Department of Defense.



INSTITUTIONAL NEWS

Equity and Civility by Design

Wellness, equity and civility:
These three values weave together,
complement and inform one another
to create USC Upstate's Impact
Agenda, the foundation for the various
systems that make up the university
and its operations.

"Our Impact Agenda defines how the university does business," says Chief Diversity Officer Alphonso Atkins. "Wellness represents a commitment to a physically, emotionally and educationally healthy campus. Equity reinforces the identity of everyone in the campus community, promotes inclusion and reduces harm to historically underrepresented populations. And civility is how we conduct ourselves, individually and as a whole."

The Impact Agenda was born out of Upstate's 2018-23 strategic plan, "Up, Together." The operational values of wellness, equity and civility come into play with every policy, practice and program at the university. To more fully operationalize the Impact Agenda, the university launched the Office of Institutional Equity, Inclusion and Engagement (OIEIE). Under Atkins' leadership, the new office provides oversight of the Impact Agenda



through a series of strategic objectives that ensure inclusive practices across campus and provide for regular policy reviews, among other goals.

Atkins says that over the next three years, six task forces – composed of faculty, students and community members – will be created to examine

the areas of environmental impact, regional livability, health and wellness, education, social and economic inequity, and civic participation.

The task forces will operate under an eventual REdesign initiative out of the Chancellor's Office – literally, "Racial Equity 'in' Design."



Dr. Jeannie Chapman Named Riley Fellow

Dr. Jeannie Chapman, dean of the College of Science and Technology, was selected to participate in the Riley Institute at Furman University's 28th class of Diversity Leaders Initiative. Chapman joins leaders from across the Upstate in the five-month program.

Participants will take part in a highly interactive curriculum of case studies aimed at maximizing interaction and discussion among classmates and facilitating productive relationships.

"Discovering ways in which differences can strengthen our organizations is of utmost importance as we seek to grow and support a thriving economy and rich culture," said Dr. Donald Gordon, executive director of the Riley Institute.

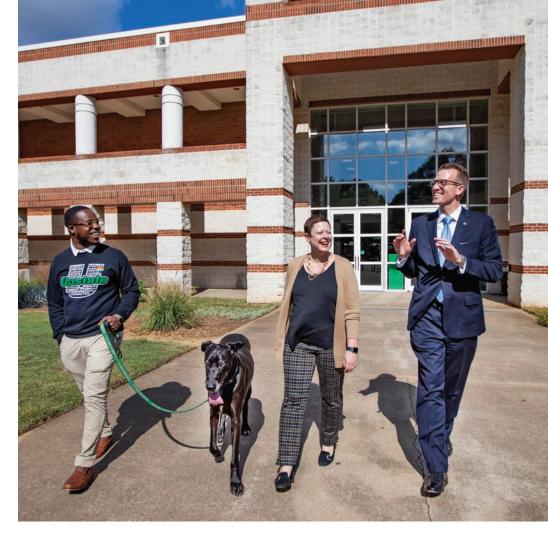
Chapman says she'll harness what she learns from the program to benefit USC Upstate, and to create opportunities for colleagues to become involved.



Upstate Student Chosen for Forbes Summit

USC Upstate student Hamilton Gmah hopes to combine his interests in physical therapy and finance when he graduates. In the meantime, he joined a select group of entrepreneurial students from across the country at the 2019 Forbes Under 30 Summit in Detroit. "It's exciting to have been selected," says Gmah. "This was a chance for me to put myself out there - with students from schools like Harvard and UCLA and hopefully, inspire those around me to do the same."

Forbes describes its Under 30 Summit as an immersive experience featuring a private music festival, A-list speakers (like this year's keynote speaker, Serena Williams), investor speed-pitching, industry-focused field trips, and a powerful day of community service.



USC Upstate Debuts "Walks With Lucy" Series

Take a walk with Lucy! In a new video series, Chancellor Brendan Kelly, First Lady Tressa Kelly, and their dog, Lucy, take in the beauty of the USC Upstate campus and surrounding community as they go out walking. Along the way, they meet with faculty, staff, students and community members to discuss the transformative opportunities USC Upstate provides and the impact the university is having on the Upstate region and beyond. Episode 1 featured special guest John Reckenbeil, '96, an Upstate attorney, and student Tyone Archie, pictured above with the Kellys. View the series at uscupstate.edu/lucy.



NBA Star Drops by Alma Mater

Former Spartans standout Torrey Craig, '14, who currently plays in the NBA with the Denver Nuggets, stopped by USC Upstate in July, where he shot some hoops with the men's team and visited with coach Dave Dickerson and Chancellor Brendan Kelly. While in the Upstate, Craig also held a basketball camp for kids at a local school.

A New Leader in Student Affairs:

OUR GOOD FORTUNE

Dr. André Fortune joined USC Upstate over the summer as vice chancellor of Student Affairs. He is described by former colleagues as a "bridge builder," and offers firsthand experience in developing programs that leverage the natural intersections of Student Affairs and Academic Affairs. Most recently, Fortune was Assistant Vice President of Student Affairs at the University of Texas at Arlington, a public comprehensive university with global enrollment of more than 58,000 students.

In addressing questions about the challenges facing students today, Fortune cites mental health and coping skills, awareness of the impacts of gun and sexual violence, and retention. He speaks to the significance of an "amazing" student experience as part of the solution to these all-too-familiar issues.

What excites you most about your new role as Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs?

I think the most exciting opportunity is in how we can increase our contributions to student success. We have a lot of good people here who are doing really good work and now through our strategic planning process and the way we are reviewing and measuring our progress, there's an opportunity to show continuous improvement.

How can we help students the most?

From a Student Affairs perspective, the answer lies in how students engage with the campus, particularly outside of the classroom. We have many students who are engaged, but there are others who may stop at participation. To me, engagement is a higher level of involvement, and

research shows that the better the outof-class experience, the better the inclass experience, and the more likely a student is to graduate.

What are the ways students can become more engaged?

We have a number of programs already in place, including the FLEX program, our freshman leadership experience. Any of our 90-plus clubs and organizations will offer opportunities for students to grow their leadership skills. Whether a student chooses to become a leader or serve as a member, they have a chance to practice skills like communication and collaboration, which will help prepare students for life after graduation.

How did you become involved in Student Affairs?

Looking back, it seems happenstance; I fell into it when I was working on a project with my college fraternity. As I learned more about it, my thengirlfriend, now wife, thought I'd be good at it. I began in Admissions recruiting students and then realized that as much as I enjoyed bringing students in, I wanted to be involved in the experience they had once they

were on campus - to be a mentor and foster their growth and development all the way through graduation. As a firstgen college student myself, having mentors in place to help me navigate the system really made a difference.

How does what you know about college play into lessons you teach your own children?

I am fortunate to have grown up in a household with both parents. I realize that so many of our students have not.





As vice chancellor of Student Affairs, Dr. André Fortune oversees campus events such as Big Green Welcome, below, which introduces new students to campus at the start of the academic year. Fortune says ensuring students have an "amazing" experience in college is important for keeping them engaged.





so I am conscious that it not be taken for granted. My own children are lucky, too. They have parents who have collectively earned five degrees, so for them, it's not a question of if you're going to go to college, but it's which one. Education has always been valued in our family. My father still talks about what he might have accomplished if he'd had the opportunity to finish school.

What do you like to do for fun, to relax? I like to spend time with my family on

and off campus. I do try to get out to support all of our athletes and student activities. Some people might say, "But you're still working," and that's true. But I enjoy it and my family enjoys it. One thing people may not know about me is that I am a fan of amusement parks. I love thrill rides!

Is there anything else you want people to know about you? I genuinely care. I have long aspired to be a leader in higher education and

I've been intentional about the types of institutions at which I've built a career. For me, it's not just about the campus community, but the overall community and the things we're trying to achieve together. USC Upstate and Spartanburg really inspire me. We are literally changing lives and that's what higher education is all about.

Fortune lives in Spartanburg with his wife Shanetta and their children Jairus, Jayla and Jahrell, along with their dog, Sammy.







A RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

The secret sauce behind the food franchise empire built by Lee Ann, '80, and Allen Johnston

FLIP BURGERS FOR A LIVING."

It's a phrase that has certain... connotations.

But for Lee Ann Johnston, '80, and her husband, best friend and business partner, Allen, it's a mantra spoken with pride every time they tell people what they do for a living. And with good reason.

Upon the humble hamburger, the Johnstons have built one of the Upstate's most recognized entrepreneurial enterprises - a venture that has required their complete investment of knowledge, time and financial discipline.

"When you look back on it, I guess you could say we've been very blessed," says Lee Ann Johnston. "There were times when we didn't know what was going to happen, but we always worked hard, believed in each other and our employees, and remained committed to giving our customers and our communities the highest level of service possible."

The Johnstons are owners of The Butcher The Baker Management Co. and Chix and Bix LLC. Their companies own and operate eight Fuddruckers restaurants, two "Fudd Trucks," and six

Bojangles franchise locations in two states. Their eateries employ more than 500 people during seasonal peaks and provide the means for the Johnstons to support a variety of organizations across the communities they serve, including Mobile Meals, March of Dimes, Paws for a Cause, the YMCA Scholarship Campaign, Food Rescue Mission, The Carpenter's Table Food Pantry and a ministry devoted to celebrating mothers.

In 2016, Gov. Nikki Haley awarded the Johnstons the Order of the Palmetto, the state's highest civilian honor. Lee Ann was named USC Upstate's Distinguished Alumna of the Year in 2010. In 2007, the couple was recognized as the S.C. Restaurateurs of the Year.

Warm, friendly and modest to a fault, the Johnstons never miss an



opportunity to put their experience, energy and attention to detail to work for their customers. Recently, while visiting their Fuddruckers restaurant in Duncan, they each spent time greeting and mingling with staff. Allen picked up a napkin discarded by a customer. Lee Ann noticed two TVs in the restaurant's dining room had gone kaput. She asked the staff to order two more.

Where did this enthusiasm and concern for the customer experience come from? It all started more than four decades ago, when they were just setting out on their journey together. Allen went to Wade Hampton High School. Lee Ann was at Spartan High. It was the late 1970s and the couple met

while they were working concessions at Spartanburg Memorial Auditorium during the National Wrestling Alliance's Mid-Atlantic Heavyweight Championships. Sparks flew and it wasn't long before they were dating.

Lee Ann, then 17, was working nights at the Pine Street YMCA. That's where she met a man who would eventually change both their lives.

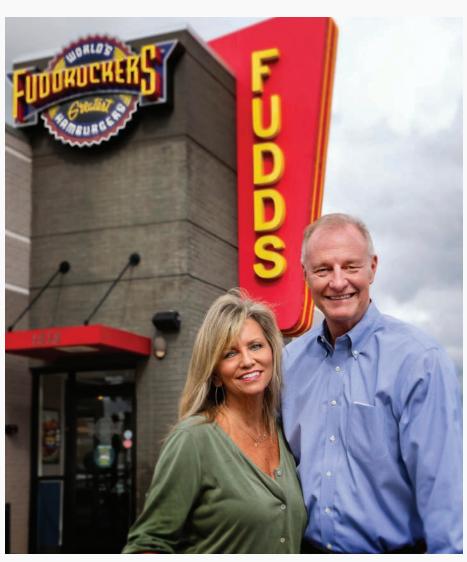
Jerry Richardson was co-founder of Spartan Food Systems Inc., which at one time owned hundreds of Hardee's restaurants and the Quincy Family Steakhouse chain. He also later became the founding owner of the National Football League's Carolina Panthers.

Richardson was immediately

impressed with Lee Ann, and offered her a job at Spartan Food Systems. She got her start at one of the company's busiest restaurants — a Hardee's near Hearon Circle in Spartanburg.

After their high school graduation, Allen went off to Clemson University while Lee Ann headed to USC Upstate. She remembers waking up at 4 a.m. to make biscuits at the restaurant, then going to class in her uniform and later returning to work the afternoon shift. Although they were both from middle-income families, the Johnstons had to work for everything they hoped to earn.

In 1980, the couple married. Lee Ann continued to work her way up through the ranks at Spartan Food Systems



Lee Ann, '80, and Allen Johnston are the owners of eight Fuddruckers restaurants and six Bojangles franchise locations in two states. Allen serves on the university's Capital Development Foundation Board of Directors.





and eventually became an assistant in Richardson's office. Allen was recruited to serve as a district manager for Quincy's.

"Working for Mr. Richardson was like getting a master's degree in business without ever having to attend class," Lee Ann says. "He was constantly teaching, coaching and motivating."

"At Spartan Foods Systems, Mr. Richardson was direct and had a powerful presence, but he also had a caring spirit that touched everyone in our company," Johnston adds. "He was always concerned about each person's well-being and treated everyone like family. He has never changed. Through his hard work, determination and

values, he helped create the best company in South Carolina."

In 1984, the business mogul encouraged the couple to strike out on their own. They did some research and found an up-and-coming franchise in the burgeoning gourmet burger industry - Fuddruckers. With Richardson as a partner, the Johnstons opened their first Fuddruckers, a 7,000-square-foot restaurant off Reidville Road in Spartanburg, in 1985.

It wasn't easy at first. It took some time and a lot of trial and error before they were able to win over local diners. The couple remembers they once refinanced Lee Ann's car to make

payroll and even borrowed from family members. They stayed in the game, however, and were eventually rewarded for their efforts.

In 2020, the couple will celebrate the 35th anniversary of the opening of their flagship restaurant.

"You have to work hard, be dedicated and be passionate about what you're doing," Lee Ann says. "Education and success both come from being a sponge - absorb everything you can. Always have a desire and determination to learn more. If you do that, then you will be successful at whatever you choose to do."

"Oh, and by the way," she adds, "we're hiring."



In addition to their restaurants, the Johnstons own two "Fudd trucks," one of which is operated by Lee Ann Johnston's brother. The truck stopped by campus a few days during the fall to provide another dining option while the food court is being revamped.

A Letter From the Vice Chancellor for University Advancement

As we celebrate all that is fall, connecting with alumni is top of mind. You may have noticed our new initiatives aimed at keeping alumni informed about opportunities to re-engage on campus. We have enjoyed welcoming our graduates back to participate in events, classes and career workshops. To enhance communication efforts, we recently launched our Alumni App, as well as an electronic newsletter, both of which should make spotting these opportunities easier.

This fall, we are taking the next step in connecting our graduates with their university, but also to each other. We know that we have more than 30,000 alumni living and working in the Upstate region. And, we know that many of these alums are successful business owners and community leaders. You'll see many of them profiled in this issue. Who better than those who have come before us to show new graduates the way?

Enter Handshake. Utilized by universities across the country, Handshake is a dynamic, online platform that allows students to connect with employers and, conversely, employers with students. We'll be using Handshake to help current students find the internship that makes their higher education experience more complete, and to match seniors with prospective employers.

We know that the more engaged a student is on campus, the greater the chances they'll graduate. Creating a sense of belonging for students is key, and tools like Handshake literally help students make those critical connections. Once connected, relationships can take root and grow.

If you are a graduate of USC Upstate, I encourage you to share your internship and job opportunities with current



students. Please don't hesitate to reach out to me or my colleagues in our Career Management department for more information.

I hope you'll enjoy the rest of this beautiful season. Mark your calendars for Homecoming, which we'll host this year on Jan. 26 - Feb. 1, 2020. We look forward to seeing you on campus soon!

Sincerely,

Dr. Meredith N. Brunen

Vice Chancellor for University Advancement Executive Director of University Foundations

Meredies U. Bunen



Jakie, '80, and Charlie Hodge, center, have established a scholarship endowment for student-athletes who are pursuing a degree in education at USC Upstate. The Hodges are longtime supporters of USC Upstate and its mission to provide an education for the many. With the Hodges are, from left, John Fray, associate athletic director for development; Laura Reynolds, dean of the School of Education, Human Performance and Health; and Daniel Feig, athletic director.

Community Leaders Dedicate Time, Talent to University

The university is fortunate to have a number of volunteer-service leaders who advocate, support, and dedicate themselves to advancing the institution's mission through four distinct service organizations: The Spartanburg County Commission for Higher Education, USC Upstate Foundation Board of Directors and Capital Development Foundation Board of Directors.



SPARTANBURG COUNTY COMMISSION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

Vic Bailey Dr. David Church, '92 Bill Cobb, '74 Patrick Cutler Dr. David Eubanks Anne Flynn Dr. Ron Garner, '94 Scott Heath Ben Hines Jason Maertens Cathy McCabe Ryan McCarty Harold McClain Eddie Payne Chip Smith, '78 John Travers **Tommy Young**

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Upstate Alums Take on the Town

Grads peddle new cycling center in Spartanburg

Chris Crowley, '11, and his wife, Garrow, have teamed up with Simone Mack-Orr, '04, to open a franchise location of the trendy indoor cycling concept CycleBar at 120 St. John St.

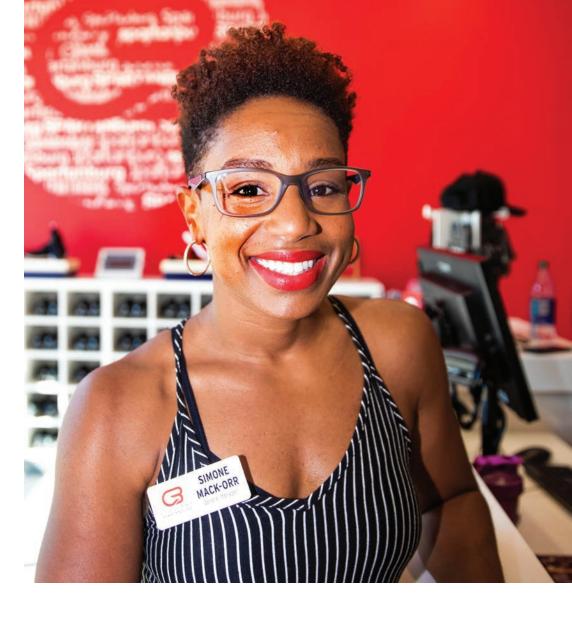
The 3,500-square-foot space features a large "spinning" room full of the latest exercise bikes and sound equipment, lockers and changing rooms, and a retail area where visitors can stock up on exercise apparel and accessories.

Sunlight beams through the studio's storefront, while customers are met at the door with a smile and warm greeting from Mack-Orr, the general manager.

Crowley, a former textile executive, says he and his wife decided to open the center to support the revitalization of the city's urban center. They were pleased to find a fitness expert in Mack-Orr, who could help them achieve their vision for the studio.

"We wouldn't be where we are without her," Crowley says. "She is extremely diligent — just a dream. Everybody knows her. I can't sing her praises high enough ... We didn't find out about our shared connection to USC Upstate until after we met. But it has definitely strengthened our bond."

The location, designed by the Crowleys' daughter, Kathleen Crowley, who works for Spartanburg-based McMillan Pazdan Smith Architecture, is



open seven days a week. Mack-Orr says it currently hosts about 50 classes per week.

"We're very excited about it," Crowley says. "Although we want to make a profit, that's not the reason we chose to do this. We wanted to do something that would have a positive impact on downtown."

Mack-Orr, a native of Spartanburg, began teaching fitness classes at the Spartanburg Athletic Club while she was still in college.

In 2011, she got into competitive bodybuilding and became a certified personal trainer. She even started her own wellness program a few years ago, Smack Fitness Club.

After she started teaching classes at a CycleBar in Greenville, S.C., Mack-Orr immediately saw the potential for a location in her hometown — and, she says, she frequently let company leaders know about the opportunity just down the road.

Her wish came true about a year ago, when the Crowleys approached her with their plans for a Spartanburg location.

"Everything has really fallen into place," Mack-Orr says. "The Crowleys are wonderful to work with. I give them so much credit for seeing a need in the community and meeting it. This has exceeded my expectations and the response from the community has been overwhelmingly positive. We're looking forward to a bright future here."

Family restaurant serves the community

When Carter Ridgeway, '08, joined his family's dining operation after graduating from USC Upstate, he was determined to not only keep the business going, but help it grow and become a fixture in downtown Spartanburg's food scene.

"I was able to take the things I learned in class and apply them," said Ridgeway, co-owner and manager of





Carter Ridgeway, '08, co-owner of Two Samuels Restaurant and Catering.

Lanie Whitaker, '14, co-owner of Arrowhead Design.

Two Samuels Restaurant and Catering at 351 E. Henry St. "For example, I wrote a business plan. There were certain computer skills and templates I learned ... I felt prepared because I was given some real-world tools that were very practical."

Ridgeway graduated from Broome High School in Spartanburg, where he excelled as a soccer player and football placekicker. He was recruited to play soccer at USC Upstate in 2004, but soon found the campus had many other benefits to offer.

"I always liked the smaller class sizes and atmosphere," he says. "Of course, it has grown since then. But I always thought it was better than getting lost in the shuffle somewhere else ... My professors were excellent. My experience was extremely good."

Ridgeway earned his Bachelor of Science degree in business. After graduation, he joined his dad, Sammy Ridgeway, at the restaurant and catering operation the elder Ridgeway had opened in 2004. Back then, it was named Ribault St. Eatery and Catering.

In 2009, the father and son team renovated the company's physical space and rebranded it as Two Samuels.

"I think that even if I hadn't decided to do this, I still would've been well

prepared for whatever I wanted to do," the younger Ridgeway says. "Spartanburg is still a close-knit community and I feel like the relationship USC Upstate has with that community is something truly special."

Designing a business strategy Lanie Whitaker, '14, knows life's ironies better than most.

The knee injuries that derailed her collegiate basketball career set her on a path to realize her entrepreneurial dream as the founder, co-owner and lead designer for Arrowhead Design Co., a growing graphic design startup in downtown Spartanburg.

"A lot of people say you can't do anything with an art degree," says Whitaker. "I think that just depends."

A native of Greenville, S.C., Whitaker moved to Spartanburg County, where she attended Boiling Springs High School, became a standout guard for the Lady Bulldogs and was recruited to play for the University of North Carolina at Charlotte.

In 2010, during her freshman season with the 49ers, Whitaker tore the anterior cruciate ligaments in both knees. She realized her playing days were over, so she decided to open a new chapter and pursue a degree in graphic design.

"I always wanted to get into graphic design, but USC Charlotte didn't have it," says Whitaker. "My mom, Terri Whitaker, who is an advisor for the Mary Black School of Nursing, said, 'You should check out USC Upstate.' So I did."

Whitaker says she took full advantage of opportunities to learn her craft. She served as president of the Club of Art and Design and worked at The Studio, Upstate's student-run graphic design center.

"I feel like I had a very personalized experience at USC Upstate," says Whitaker. "I had amazing opportunities to not only hone my design skills, but to learn the business side of it, too. I had a little taste of everything. I was able to hit the ground running after I graduated because I already had a great network."

In 2016, Whitaker teamed up with her business partner Jamie Woodruff, who also attended USC Upstate. Their company serves clients across the Spartanburg community, including R.J. Rockers Brewing Co., Spartanburg Science Center, Total Ministries, and Spartan Waste.

"We have a great team and we're having a lot of fun," says Whitaker. "We've got some great clients and we want to continue to contribute to Spartanburg's economic growth."











- 1 Chancellor Brendan Kelly leads members of the press on a campus tour during Media Day in September.
- 2 Collin Mackie, Brian Rogers, Jeff Berline and Jason Adams of Capital Corp. take on the Spartan Golf Classic in August. The event helps raise funds to support USC Upstate student-athletes.
- 3 USC Upstate welcomes Dr. Shirleatha Lee, second from left, as its new dean of the Mary Black School of Nursing during a reception at The Piedmont Club in September. With Dr. Lee are her husband, Timmothye Lee, from left, Benita Hopkins, Harold McClain, Laverne McClain and Scott Heath.
- Vice Chancellor for University Advancement Dr. Meredith Brunen and businessman and former Spartanburg Mayor Bill Barnet take part in welcoming high school students to the Academic Outreach Camp over the summer.
- 5 George Moseley, Gracie Adams, Rebecca Turner and Tommy Young attend the reception for Dr. Lee.
- 6 Community friends and supporters welcome former Ambassador Vicki Huddleston, fourth from left, to campus for a lecture on the decline of diplomacy and the rise of terrorism in Africa.











- 7 Chancellor Brendan Kelly, from left, student Tyone Archie, attorney John G. Reckenbeil, '96, and Vice Chancellor Meredith Brunen take a break from shooting "Walks with Lucy," a new video series on the USC Upstate website.
- 8 Dean Mo Djerdjouri, from left, Maj. Christian Balan and Ethan Burroughs, Spartanburg market president for Wells Fargo, at the Wells Fargo Speaker Series on Sept. 19 at The George. Balan was the featured speaker at the event.
- 9 Ethan Burroughs, Spartanburg market president for Wells Fargo, left, presents a check for the Wells Fargo Speaker
- Series at the George Dean Johnson, Jr. School of Business and Economics to Benita Hopkins, associate vice chancellor for development and alumni relations, and Mo Djerdjouri, dean of the school.
- Mike Kohler, left, is introduced by Rob McCormick, dean of the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences, at the History of Kohler event at the George Dean Johnson, Jr. College of **Business and Economics.**
- 11 Athletics alumni gather for an all-sports reunion in May.

In August, the USC Upstate Alumni Association hosted Upstate on Main, a special event at Liberty Tap Room in Greenville. Alums were welcomed by Chancellor Brendan Kelly, members of the advancement office team and USC Upstate staff, and sampled food and craft beer while mingling with their fellow Spartans.

The event was an opportunity to learn about what's happening at Upstate and connect with old friends.





- 1 Cianna Clinkscales, '18
- 2 Takasha Blassingame, '18, Dr. Kimberly Walker, and Dr. Meredith Brunen
- 3 Chancellor Brendan Kelly, Travis Suttles, '11, Rueben Duren, '10, and Tim Ellis
- 4 From left, Stacey Mills, '03, Chancellor Brendan Kelly, Naomi Prince, Stacey Burr, Alyssa Dickerson, '12, Andrew Hopkins, '10, Sheree Simpson, Edward Simpson, Jessica Smith
- 5 Joshua Jones, Jacqueline Mills, '03, and Stacey Mills, '03





Proceeds from the race benefit the Josh Lee Memorial Scholarship Fund, which supports USC Upstate student-athletes in the cross country and track and field programs.

8 a.m. start at G.B. Hodge Center, USC Upstate

Register at: https://runsignup.com/Race/SC/Spartanburg/JoshLeeMemorial5KRun

Every gift - and every amount - makes a difference!



Why Give?

Your gifts will help enhance the educational experience for our students and the university capitalize on its tremendous positive momentum, forge our path ahead and achieve even greater heights.

USC Upstate has a laser focus on creating transformative opportunities by providing rigorous, career-relevant, and accessible education; enhancing the quality of life in Upstate South Carolina; and being the university of choice for faculty, staff, students and the community.

By investing in these key priorities, you will positively impact the university's ability to contribute to our region and our state's future economic and overall prosperity, creating brighter futures for all whom we serve.

Up is where we live.

uscUPstate.edu/give

Dr. Shirleatha Lee:

Nursing's in Her Blood

Dr. Shirleatha Lee joined USC Upstate over the summer as dean, just in time to oversee one of the most rigorous reaccreditation processes in the industry. So Lee says she'll spend a large part of her first year working to ensure that the Mary Black School of Nursing (MBSON) does, indeed, maintain its accreditation by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE). Renewal comes up next fall.

"We'll spend the next year doing gap analyses, learning what's working well and how we can improve to ensure we meet CCNE's standards," says Lee. "We want to make sure we're ready. It's a huge undertaking."

Among other criteria, CCNE will evaluate four primary areas: mission and governance; institutional commitment and resources; curriculum and teaching-learning practices; and program effectiveness. The evaluation will include a close examination of learning outcomes, clinical practice experiences for students, and the school's ability to maintain high retention, graduation, licensure and certification pass rates for all programs. Lee says she accepted the role at Upstate knowing she'd be able to help the MBSON get there.

"I read that USC Upstate was looking for someone who could grow and innovate academic programs, and that was a big part of my role in Memphis," says Lee. "Knowing that I had an opportunity to go somewhere and really use my skill set — my strengths — was part of what drew me here. I felt I could make a difference."

Lee joined USC Upstate from the Loewenberg College of Nursing at the University of Memphis, where she served as associate dean of Academic Programs. She says she never set out to be a dean, but once in the role, discovered how much she enjoyed the work.

Lee had practiced nursing for several years when a colleague in clinical practice told her she would be a good educator, "As I entered academia and started to teach, I realized I was not just impacting one patient, but I'm impacting eight students who are impacting three, four, five patients, and now I'm impacting patients exponentially. As dean, I'm able to shape and develop a team of faculty, and I have always believed, it is important to support faculty development and growth because the better the faculty, the better the nurses, and the better the patient outcomes."

Lee says that one of the most important parts of her role is to prepare students for what can be a demanding career choice, particularly as the nation continues to experience a nursing shortage. "I always tell students, 'If you don't care about people, if you don't have a love for people, this is not the profession for you."

Lee continues, "Some students will say, 'I just want a good job, a good place to work,' but that's not what nursing is about. This is tough work. You have to truly care about your patients. If you really have a drive and desire to make a difference in people's lives, then nursing is the place for you."

Work/life balance is something Lee also stresses to her students, as the field is constantly changing and nurses must work hard to stay current. "This is not a profession in which you can get to a place and just stop learning," she says. "Nursing education builds from one semester to the next, from one year to the next, throughout your career."

But Lee knew all of that when she went into the field. Nursing's in her blood. Her mother, Shirley Taylor, recently retired from nursing after almost 30 years. And Lee admits that, sometimes, she misses providing care at the bedside. "But the fact is," she says, "nurses can make an impact in many distinct ways and it is difficult to serve as an educator, practitioner, researcher, and administrator all at once. Some people do, but it is challenging."

As dean, Lee's got two primary goals for the next several months: to help ensure reaccreditation, and to increase the visibility of the school by leveraging partnerships and growing the school's presence in the community. "Increasing visibility may require creativity—so we have to use the resources we have to make our voices known. I say to everyone I meet, 'Let me tell you about all of the wonderful work we're doing at the Mary Black School of Nursing!"

Lee earned a Ph.D. in Nursing from the University of Tennessee Health Science Center. She is married to Timmothye Lee. They have two daughters, Tiana, 11, and Calysa, 18, who is a freshman in college and studying ... nursing.



Dr. Shirleatha Lee began her tenure as dean of the Mary Black School of Nursing at USC Upstate over the summer. Overseeing reaccreditation will be her first major project this academic year.



In Sickness and in Health

The partnership between Mary Black School of Nursing and Spartanburg Regional is built on trust in skilled nursing grads

The Mary Black School of Nursing's relationship with Spartanburg Regional Medical Center is a point of pride for the school. Many of its graduates are employed by Regional, and its degree programs are a talent pipeline for the health system. "Having the support of health care systems like Spartanburg Regional helps us educate our students in the same clinical practice environments where many of them desire to work," says Dean Shirleatha Lee. And those careers cover all aspects of care, from bedside nursing to management:

Getting started

Isabelo Sumagui, '18, and Kaleeah Rivera, '19, are recent hires at Regional. Sumagui works on the cardiac floor, which has special meaning for him. "When I was in fourth grade, my mother had open heart surgery and stayed at Regional," says Sumagui. "I saw how well she was taken care of by the nurses."

That was the experience that first sparked his interest in health care, but it turned out his new job had additional significance. "When I told my parents I got the job, my mother told me she had been admitted on that floor," Sumagui says. "I had no idea."

Rivera, a registered nurse on the medical surgery floor, also decided to pursue nursing because of a personal experience. Her grandfather came to live with her family after he was diagnosed with cancer, and Rivera would help take care of him. "It made me feel good to help him do things he wasn't able to do for himself," she says.

While she's still getting used to the new job, Rivera says her patients always make her feel good when they tell her they wouldn't have known she

"If I do something for them, they say they love me," she says. "It makes me so happy."

Troubleshooting

Lewis Miller, '14, likes solving problems.

As an emergency center quality specialist, Miller looks at where the challenges are and comes up with a process to address them. "It can be a care issue, it can be a flow issue, it can be staffing," he says. "It's almost like a puzzle."

Patient care is foremost for Miller. Whether he's focused on staff development or improving processes, the patient experience is always a priority for him. "Patients are people," he says. "It's really important to me to personalize care, and not treat people like numbers."

Millers notes that the growth of the health care industry has opened up a lot of career options in nursing, both at the bedside and in administration. "What makes nursing interesting is there's a million places you can work," he says. "I highly encourage people to look for quality improvement areas in nursing, because those are the future of nursing."

Making a difference

Sharlene Parmley, a clinical nurse leader, has two degrees from Upstate – 12 years apart.

Parmley, '05, MSN '17, began her career in the oncology unit, but has

served in other units as well. In every position, the leadership skills she learned in the BSN program have proved invaluable, she says.

"Coming out of school and beginning as a nurse, you really have to interact with a lot of people," says Parmley. "You have to be confident in what you know, and also know how to communicate effectively what you don't know."

Parmley stayed close to her alma mater, serving as a preceptor to nursing students in their senior practicum as a way to give back. When she decided she wanted to go back to school, she liked that Upstate's CNL program would give her the opportunity to have an impact.

As a clinical nurse leader, she wears many hats: She speaks on behalf of nurses at committee meetings; does some patient care; identifies areas for improvement; and researches options to accomplish those changes.

"It's a perfect blend of patient care, research, and leadership," she says.

Always learning

Heather Flynn, '03, a nursing clinical educator, says when she was studying for her associate's degree at Upstate, her teachers instilled in her that she would always be learning.



Kaleeah Rivera, '19

"I attribute the reason why I'm willing to learn, and why I'm an educator myself in the hospital, to my instructors I had at that time," she says. "They were very good at explaining that health care is constantly changing, and we are preparing you to take care of patients and adapt more and learn as you grow."

In her role, Flynn works with newly hired nurses in many different units, arranging orientation, classes and competencies and keeping staff up to date and trained on new regulations and policies. And not only is she continuing to learn, she's helping others do the same.

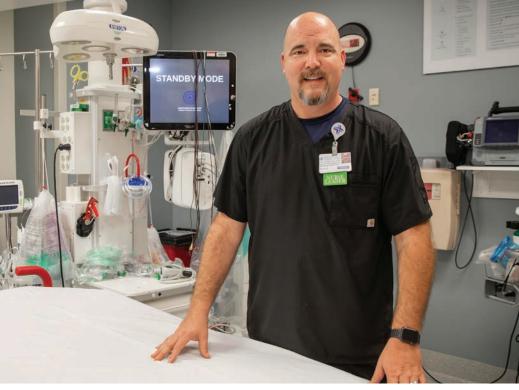
"I really enjoy working with the new graduate nurses and then a year later seeing them when they're getting ready to take on more responsibility," she says. "I take a little bit of pride in knowing that I had a small involvement in their success."

Newfound respect

Maurice Hood, '02, knew just what he wanted to do for his career. A student at Lander University to start with, he planned to transfer to the Medical University of South Carolina, complete his degree and work at the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta.

But then his daughter was born, and commuting between Charleston and his home in Spartanburg didn't seem attractive anymore. So he looked for academic options closer to home.

Hood's sister, a certified nurse, suggested he look at USC Upstate's nursing program. At first, Hood was dead-set against it. "I remember my exact words were, no man, that's women's work," he says. "I'm not going to do that!"



Lewis Miller, '14

But he enrolled in the program, and, to his surprise, "I absolutely fell in love with loving on patients and people that were in need," he says.

Now the team lead for outpatient hospice, Hood says he can't imagine why he ever wanted to work in a lab. Being able to provide comfort at a difficult time, and receiving the heartfelt thanks of patients, "there's really no way to explain how awesome that is," he says.

Labor of love

Cheryl Suttles, ADN '91, BSN '95, has worked in labor and delivery for her entire career. She arrived as a nurse right after graduation and is now a nurse manager overseeing 80 employees.

It wasn't what Suttles initially saw herself doing when she was a teenager.

Though she comes from a family of nurses, she admits she "couldn't even stand the smell of the hospital" when she dropped by to visit her mom, also a nurse.

But a part-time job in Regional's pharmacy after she graduated from high school made her rethink her earlier position and led her to enroll in nursing school, which she loved.

Though she has a large staff, Suttles makes time to speak with them individually once a quarter. Sometimes, she'll even step in and cover while someone is at lunch, giving her a chance to do a little bedside nursing. "I just love what I do, being a manager and helping get the staff what they need and to make this a good place to work," she says.

Heather Flynn, '03, at left



Studio Portrait

How USC Upstate's student-run design agency is creating opportunities for graduates

When junior Mia Llaca-Curiel graduates, she'll have more than a portfolio of her graphic design work to show potential employers.

Llaca-Curiel is the student art director of The Studio, USC Upstate's student-run design center. While this is her first year in the position, she began working at The Studio last year, as a junior designer. The experience has given her an overview of how design firms work, from meeting with clients to managing office workflow.

"For me, it was great that I could get real-world experience and get to know my field and what I was going to be doing after college," she says.

That was precisely the goal when The Studio got started six years ago, say faculty co-directors Bridget Kirkland and Matt Donaldson. Students who work there learn what to expect in a professional environment.

"We stress constantly, graphic design is a super competitive field in terms of landing a job," says Donaldson. "By working in The Studio, they see just how competitive it really is and what they have to put into it if they want to land those jobs."

While Kirkland and Donaldson oversee operations, The Studio is set up to give students maximum autonomy. After Kirkland meets with potential clients to assess their project and discuss terms, she introduces them to Llaca-Curiel, who assigns the job to one of the senior designers. Donaldson reviews the project when it's nearing completion and provides feedback, but the concept and execution are left to the student.

In addition to the senior designers, who have completed upper-level design courses, one or two junior designers also work in The Studio. These students are not assigned their own projects, Kirkland explains, but they shadow or assist the senior designers in preparation for moving up to a senior position the following year.

"In North and South Carolina, we are the only university that has a program like this," says Kirkland. "Every student can go to a class anywhere, but this is the one thing that sets us apart."

Students who work at The Studio also are paid above minimum wage. That's intentional, Donaldson explains, because he and Kirkland want to provide an attractive internship option right here on campus.

"The goal is to get students professional design work beyond the classroom," he says. At The Studio, "You can do an internship and get those professional pieces right here in house at Upstate."

Graduates who went through The Studio can be found at some of the biggest companies in the Upstate, including Greenville-based advertising firm EP+Co. Adrian Meadows, '15, who designs packaging at EP+Co for clients such as Verizon, says developing soft skills was an important part of his experience at The Studio.

"Being introverted, meeting clients in person or on the phone to understand their needs and problem-solve in real time really helped out a lot for what I do today," says Meadows.

Ethan Mabbitt, '18, who also works at EP+Co, says learning to put the customer's wishes first, even if he had a different vision for a project, was another valuable lesson. "Because we were working with actual clients who may have disagreed with what we were making, we would have to go back and



Faculty members Matt Donaldson and Bridget Kirkland, standing, are co-directors of The Studio, USC Upstate's student-run design center. At the desk is Mia Llaca-Curiel, the student art director.

do more work," he says. "It wasn't all based on what you thought was good, it was based on working with another set of eyes."

And whether a client interaction is positive or frustrating, it's all part of understanding what to expect in the professional world, says Kirkland. In the best cases, students develop local contacts who can provide references or share job leads they know about.

Joey Carreno, '19, who works on the

digital team at EP+Co, agrees. "The Studio gives you a lot of real-world experience that you don't get from classes," she says. "You get to interact with people in the community and it opens you up to a lot of opportunities and networking."

Kirkland says students who go through The Studio learn time management, too. While at first they may be tempted to take on a bunch of projects, they soon realize they have

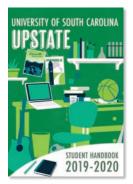












Students who work at The Studio design a variety of projects for both university and community clients, from logos and posters to promotional materials.



Joey Carreno, '19, from left, Adrian Meadows, '15, and Ethan Mabbitt, '18, all say the skills they learned at The Studio prepared them for their current jobs at national advertising firm EP+Co in Greenville.

to balance that with their classwork, she savs.

Meadows says he became good at working with deadlines as a result. "When you're doing academic projects, you're given a month or two to create, flesh it out, do all your research, but when you're dealing with a real-world client, you might not have a month to do it."

Since both Kirkland and Donaldson are full-time faculty members, The Studio is a labor of love for them.

"We've invested all this extra time in it because we want something for the students," Donaldson says.

Both envision growing the program so it can be a recruitment tool for the university and attract more talented students. They also hope to develop more community clients as The Studio's name recognition grows.

Kirkland and Donaldson believe that will happen as more graduates enter the local workforce. Since The Studio is still young, the alumni base is small,

but there's potential for those former students to become mentors and even financial supporters the longer they're in the workforce, Donaldson and Kirkland say.

Kirkland also hopes The Studio becomes just as much an asset for Spartanburg as for USC Upstate. "I want to have an outlet for the community to have good design," she says. "It's just as important to see good logos around and well-designed brochures. It elevates how people feel about themselves."







Inaugural Global Career Symposium Connects Students, Employers

USC Upstate debuted a new kind of career workshop this fall.

On Oct. 23, the university hosted the inaugural Global Career Symposium: A World of Opportunities.

Sponsored by Spartanburg-based Milliken & Co. and German auto supplier Dräxlmaier, the event provided 150 USC Upstate, local high school and area community college students with opportunities to connect with representatives from 15 Upstate employers that are actively hiring.

The event also included an internship fair, roundtable discussions, and a panel discussion on the "Next Generation Global Student."

"It was very exciting," says Jamir Watts, a senior finance major from Greenwood, S.C. "This was a good way for students from a variety of backgrounds and areas of study to get involved — to start a dialogue with employers even before we graduate. I think it says a lot about the quality of this university and our students that so many employers were willing to participate."

The event was organized by USC Upstate faculty members Alex Lorenz, assistant professor of German, Alex Akulli, director of the university's Center for International Studies, and Hannah Terpack, director of Career Management.

Lorenz says the symposium is closely tied to USC Upstate's mission, which is to create transformative opportunities for residents of the Upstate and beyond.

"This is a conversation we're starting in the classroom with our students," he says. "It's about career readiness. How can you promote yourself? Then, it moves to something like what you see here at the symposium."

"It's really an academic career event combining academia with the community," Lorenz adds. "We have students from many different fields of study all in one room with employers. It shows them what's available to them." ...

Participating companies

- Milliken & Co.
- Kobelco
- Dräxlmaier
- P3 Group
- **BMW**

- Senator International
- FedEx
- Spartanburg Economic Futures Group
- Fehrer Automotive
- TD Bank
- .K. Hoffman
- Upstate SC Alliance
- Ivannovation
- Xytel Corp.



'Piedmont Past' Events **Explore Regional History**

Spartanburg County Public Libraries, in partnership with USC Upstate's College of Arts. Humanities, and Social Sciences. will host a series of lectures related to the book Recovering the Piedmont Past, Volume 2: Bridging the Centuries in the South Carolina Upcountry.

Published in early 2019 by the University of South Carolina Press, the book explores the social history of the Upstate in the years following Reconstruction.

Edited by USC Upstate professors Drs. Paul Grady and Andrew Myers, the book features stories from 11 contributors, including USC Upstate faculty members Catherine Canino, Kevin Michael Krause and Rob McCormick, Grady and Myers.

Each event is free, and will be held at the Library at 151 S. Church Street.

November 21: Marvin L. Cann, "Robert Quillen: An Upcountry Apostle for Small-Town Life."

December 10: Diane C. Vecchio, "The Scourge of the South: Pellagra and Poverty in Spartanburg's Mill Villages."

January 21, 2020: Robert B. McCormick, "Crazed Mystic in the White House: W. P. Beard, White Supremacy, and Opposition to World War I."

February 11, 2020: Andrew H. Myers, "Booker T. Washington, Spartanburg, and the Cherokee Springs Hotel."

March 24, 2020: Catherine G. Canino, "From Sparta to Spartanburg: The Experience of Greek Americans in Spartanburg, South Carolina."

April 14, 2020: Alexia Jones Helsley, "Better Babies: Dr. Daniel Lesesne Smith, His Baby Hospitals, and the Southern Pediatric Seminar."

May 5, 2020: Kevin Krause, "Paternalism Run Mad: The Subtreasury Debate, Ben Tillman, and the Farmers' Alliance in the South Carolina Upcountry." IP



Menzel headquarters in Spartanburg. Two slabs from the Berlin Wall are displayed in front of the company.

30 Years Since the Fall of the Berlin Wall: Upstate Looks Back

USC Upstate marked the 30th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall in early November with three days of events sponsored by the Wunderbar Together initiative of the German Embassy in Washington D.C. and the German-American Club of the Carolinas.

The commemoration began on Nov. 5 with an academic talk titled "1989: Historical Ruptures and Continuities" by Dr. Jason Hansen, assistant professor of history at Furman University. The keynote event was a reception on Nov. 6 at Menzel Inc., hosted by owner Hans-Jochen Menzel, during which Klaus Becker, the honorary consul of Germany, spoke about the history of German-American relations and Germany's impact on the Upstate.

Events concluded on Nov. 7 with a conversation between Dr. Alex Lorenz, assistant professor of German at USC

Upstate, and Ingo Sachtler, a former East Berlin resident who was incarcerated in a Stasi prison for attempting to flee East Germany in the 1980s. A photo and poster exhibition were also held during the week.

Lorenz says the commemoration was a way to help students understand what life was like in a physically divided country. "Imagine that one day you wake up having planned to spend the afternoon with friends that live on the other side of town, only to find out that for the next 28 years you will not be allowed to be with them." he says. "Our students have a difficult time imagining living during such extreme political unrest."

But by listening to and learning about those who had experienced it, Lorenz says, "I believe that we were able to bring this significant historical event into today's perspective."



"The fact that 30 years later, we celebrated the fall of the wall and its impact demonstrates that there is never a winner when we divide and exclude groups of people."

Alex Lorenz, assistant professor of German

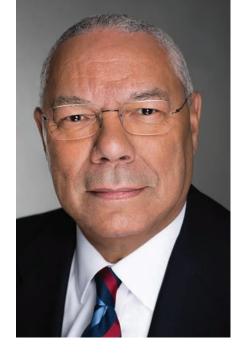
Powell to Deliver Edmunds Lecture

Retired four-star U.S. Army General and American politician Colin L. Powell will be the featured speaker at the University of South Carolina Upstate's seventh annual Dr. John B. Edmunds, Jr. Distinguished Lecture Series. The event will be held on March 19, 2020, in the G.B. Hodge Center Center.

Powell will speak on the theme of leadership, drawing from his personal experiences as a military leader, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and secretary of state.

"It is an honor and privilege to welcome General Powell to campus," said Provost Clif Flynn. "This is an extraordinary opportunity for our students and community to hear one of our nation's most distinguished public figures."

For 35 years, Powell served in the U.S. Army. Between 1987 and 1989, he was national security advisor for President Ronald Reagan, and was chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff for both President George H.W. Bush and President Bill Clinton. He was the first African American to serve in the position and the youngest officer to do so. Powell was appointed secretary of state under President George W. Bush.



Secretary of State Colin Powell and President George W. Bush attend a special meeting of the North Atlantic Council in June 2001. Credit: NATO photos



Powell is the author of the well-received autobiography "My American Journey" and a second book, "It Worked for Me: In Life & Leadership."

Since entering private life, Powell has served on the boards of several companies and nonprofits, including Bloom Energy, Salesforce.com, and the Boys and Girls Clubs of America. He is also a strategic adviser at Kleiner Perkins Caufield & Byers, a venture capital firm.

Powell was born in the Harlem to Jamaican immigrants Maud Arial and Luther Theophilus Powell. Raised in the South Bronx, Powell attended New York City public schools and earned a Bachelor of Science degree in geology from the City College of New York (CCNY).

While he was a student at CCNY, Powell joined the college's Army ROTC program, which set him on a path to pursue a military career. Powell served two tours of duty in Vietnam between 1962 and 1969. He earned 11 military decorations, including a Purple Heart, Bronze Star, a Soldier's Medal and the Legion of Merit.

After completing his service in Vietnam, Powell won a White House fellowship and was assigned to the Office of Management and Budget with President Richard M. Nixon's administration.

He was promoted to four-star general under President George H.W. Bush and appointed as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff—the highest military position in the Department of Defense. In addition to his extensive military honors, Powell has garnered prestigious civil awards, including two Presidential Medals of Freedom, the President's Citizenship Medal, the Congressional Gold Medal and the Secretary of Energy Distinguished Service Medal.

About the Edmunds Distinguished Lecture Series

In its seventh year, the Dr. John B. Edmunds, Jr. Distinguished Lecture Series is dedicated to bringing significant scholars and leaders in history, political science, philosophy and religion to the University of South Carolina

Upstate and the Upstate community. Developed by the Department of History, Political Science, Philosophy and American Studies at USC Upstate, the series has hosted Peggy Noonan, left, Rick Atkinson, David McCullough, Bob Woodward, Jon Meacham, and retired Four-Star Admiral and 16th Supreme Allied Commander of NATO Jim Stavridis. right.

Dr. John B. Edmunds, Jr. served for 43 years as a professor of American history at USC Upstate. In 1967, as the first professor hired by USC Upstate, Dr. Edmunds began a career distinguished by excellence as a teacher, scholar, and administrator.





Learning Life Lessons on Stage

The director of the USC Upstate Theatre program says when his students graduate, they take with them a huge resume of experience. That's particularly true if they participate in productions from the time they are freshmen.

"We're training our students to compete in major markets, whether it's for acting roles or leadership," says Lee Neibert, who was named director of the program last year. "Of course, what we teach in the studio classrooms is important, but our main stage productions are our finest classroom."

Neibert says that the real-life experience students gain when executing a production sets them up to take on leadership roles, like directing, as well as challenging artistic roles. But he says it's the transferable skills that set them up for real success.

"Theatre students know how to communicate, they know how to collaborate," says Neibert. "They can go into most any job and succeed because they have those great soft skills."

USC Upstate students will have another incredible opportunity to learn their craft firsthand later this year. In February, for a second consecutive year, the university will host the Region IV Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival. The four-day festival brings an impressive field of theater artists to Spartanburg.

"These artists are national and international professionals who will provide feedback on student design and performance work, and conduct workshops aimed at providing students with professional development opportunities," says Neibert, who serves as co-vice chair of the Festival. "Students have a chance to network with other students, and be recognized as among the region's finest in terms of college theater work."

The 2020 Region IV Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival will be held at USC Upstate Feb. 4-8. For more information, contact Lee Neibert, festival host, 864-503-5987, or visit: www.kcactf4.org.



UPSTATE THEATRE 2019-2020 SEASON:

A Tuna Christmas, By Ed Howard, Joe Sears and Jaston Williams

When: 8 p.m. Dec. 12 and 13

Where: Main Stage Theatre at USC Upstate Performing Arts Center

Admission: \$10 general admission (includes dessert)

Ticketing: Tickets on sale

Voices to Hear: A Diversity/Inclusion Reading

Last Night and the Night Before, By Donnetta Lavinia Grays

When: 7 p.m. Feb. 13 and 14, 2020; 3 p.m. Feb. 15

Where: Studio Theatre at USC Upstate Performing Arts Center **Admission:** Free (Donations will be accepted at the door)

Ticketing: Available Jan. 13, 2020

Three Sisters, By Anton Chekov

A new version by Pulitzer Prize finalist Sarah Ruhl, based on a literal translation by

Elise Thoron with Natalya Paramonova and Kristin Johnsen-Neshati

When: 8 p.m. April 2-4, 2020; 3 p.m. April 5, 2020

Where: Main Stage Theatre at USC Upstate Performing Arts Center

Admission: General admission \$8; \$4 for USC Upstate faculty, staff and students.

Ticketing: On sale Jan. 13, 2020

USC UPSTATE COMMERCIAL MUSIC FALL CALENDAR:

Upstate Vocal Ensemble: Fall Concert

When: 7:30 p.m. Monday, Dec. 2, 7:30 p.m.

Where: Studio Theatre at USC Upstate Performing Arts Center

USC Upstate Commercial Music Combo: '80s Night, with special guests Nëon Ârcädiä

When: 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 5

Where: Studio Theatre at USC Upstate Performing Arts Center

Admission: \$8 general admission; \$4 for USC Upstate faculty and staff; free for students

Tickets: available online at uscupstate.edu/nowplaying or at the Performing Arts Center Box Office (1-5 p.m. Monday-Friday). For more information, call 864-503-5695, or email boxoffice@uscupstate.edu.

The Power of **Public Education**

Approximately 200 new teachers graduate from USC Upstate every year.

Many of these educators will stay in the Upstate region, and many will go on to lead the schools and districts in which they completed their practicums.



Ron Garner, '94, Superintendent Spartanburg District 1

Dr. Ron Garner, '94, superintendent of Spartanburg County's School District 1, describes himself as "a country boy." He grew up in rural Whitmire, South Carolina, and was the first in his family to attend college. He admits he still becomes emotional when thinking about his graduation day and the pride his family took in him, especially his grandmother, Dortha Mae, whose formal education had ended in the seventh grade.

"I came from good stock. Good, hard-working stock," says Garner. "My mom and dad worked their fingers to the bone in the textile industry to provide for our family. I learned early on that if you worked hard and received a quality education, that the future was guaranteed by the American Dream."

Garner says that while he never set out to be a superintendent, he always knew that he wanted to be a teacher. He enrolled at USC Upstate's School of Education looking for a sense of community, and he found it.

"People cared. They just cared. They knew us; they knew who we were. They took pride in our success," Garner recalls. "I had incredible people along the way who were interested and invested in me. One faculty member wrote 'future teacher of the year' on one of my papers. That changed my life. Now, I never got that award, but I sure thought it was possible."

Among those early influencers was Dr. Russell Booker, who will retire as superintendent of Spartanburg District 7 at the end of the academic year. The two are still friends 25 years later.

"Public education is the great equalizer. It makes doors open. It provides choices. It broadens one's perspectives to think beyond the here and now."



"Ron is one of my most respected colleagues," says Booker. "He has built a notable career dedicated to enriching the lives of others. Ron has made a name for himself by his sheer determination to advance equity in education for all of our children."

Garner says he feels particularly blessed to be working in Spartanburg County, where he says the quality of education coming out of all seven school districts is outstanding, despite the challenges students today are facing.

"It's a global world. Our students are not just competing against students from the local high schools down the road. They are competing internationally for opportunities and jobs."

And, says Garner, therein lies the importance of public education.

"Public education is the great equalizer. It makes doors open. It provides choices," he says. "It broadens one's perspectives to think beyond the here and now. My grandmother's choices were limited. My parents' choices were limited. I might have a chip on my shoulder for that kid who deserves a shot."



Dr. Laura Reynolds, dean of the School of Education, Human Performance, and Health, has created partnerships with all area school districts. "One of the things I love most about this job, and I love many things," she says, "but I especially love to look out on the 10,000 people at graduation every spring. You can see the lives we're changing, one family at a time."



Garner with his grandmother, Dortha Mae, at his college graduation in 1994.



LaTunya Means, '92, Principal, Sims Middle School

Dr. LaTunya Means, '92, doesn't like to brag about her five degrees. "Once you achieve it, then what?," she asks. "It was great to earn a Ph.D., but once I accomplished that, I had to ask myself, 'Now what are you going to do with it? How are you going to make society better?"

What she's doing is improving life for students at Union County's Sims Middle School, where she's been principal for a year and a half. She's leading a team that is dedicated to inspiring at-risk students to believe that they can create opportunity for themselves.

"This is a lot of hard work, but it's also very rewarding when you see the light come on for that child who was almost lost," says Means. "I like to make my schools a safe place for people to come no matter what their background."

Means was the first in her family to earn a four-year degree. She credits mentors like Dr. Warren Carson with instilling in her a desire to excel. She met Carson, one of the university's longest serving English professors and administrators, when she joined the Gospel Choir, which he directed for 25 years.

"He helped me become the teacher I am today," says Means. "When I first took his writing class, he 'bled' all over my paper. He gave the work back to me and said, 'Make it right. Do a better job. Always work in excellence.' That has stuck with me."



Todd Hardy, '00, Principal Byrnes High School

Todd Hardy, '00, says he'd been a bit lost when he won a scholarship to attend USC Upstate. The scholarship targeted minority students interested in the field of education, and Hardy admits he wasn't immediately drawn to the field. It was his little brother who put him on the path.

"My little brother is 12 years younger than me," says Hardy. "I understood that the most meaningful thing I could do at that time in my life was to help him and his friends, to try to teach them about life."

Hardy's still showing young people how to succeed. It's harder now. He says students today are exposed to more information and knowledge than they can handle, that the explosion of social media, in particular, has made his role more challenging.

"I think our kids have trouble processing all that is coming toward them," Hardy says. "They're overwhelmed; we're seeing record numbers of students who need assistance and counseling."

Hardy says that as much as his principalship has evolved, he holds on to what he learned as a student at USC Upstate.

"There was never a time that I had a question or concern that wasn't addressed by someone. You can read, write and do arithmetic in any of a million places, but you're going to remember how you're treated, and the relationships you build, more than anvthing else." I



Education Alum Goes Back to School — This Time as a Leader

Shawna Bynum, '18, spends about 90 minutes every morning greeting parents and children as they arrive at The Franklin School, the early childhood development center on Spartanburg's Northside where she serves as director. Many of the youngsters also stop by her office for a goodbye hug when it's time to go home.

Bynum's career in early childhood education has been a steady ascent in roles and responsibilities, most recently with Spartanburg County First Steps, where she worked for six years. There, through her work with the Head Start and Early Head Start programs, she was encouraged to go back to school.

Since it was something she had wanted to do anyway, a nudge was all it took. Working full-time, Bynum enrolled at the University of South Carolina Upstate as a nontraditional student. She took classes piecemeal – at first, just one class per semester – until, at last, she graduated with a bachelor's degree in Early Childhood and Family Studies in May 2018. Soon after, she was offered the top job at The Franklin School; she started July 1 that year, and the school opened to students this past January.

"I learned so much at Upstate – that children's behaviors are communicating something, and that it's our responsibility as caregivers to understand what they are communicating," says Bynum, 50. "It was a good experience. They worked with me tremendously, and I had a lot of support."

Bynum carries the lessons she learned at Upstate with her every day, whether that's the importance of recognizing adverse childhood experiences (commonly called ACEs), or incorporating play therapy, or simply bending the ear of her mentor, Dr. Nur Tanyel, chair of the Department of Human Performance and Health in the

Shawna Bynum, '18, is director of The Franklin School, a child development center in the Northside of Spartanburg. USC Upstate is a partner in the school, which serves children from 6 weeks to 4 years old.



Children at The Franklin School enjoy story time with Shawna Bynum. Bynum, '18, went back to school to earn her bachelor's degree in Early Childhood and Family Studies after many years working in the early childhood education field.

University's School of Education, Human Performance, and Health.

When Bynum first came to Upstate, she was intimidated at first by the workload required to complete the program, Tanyel says.

"She would come up with excuses, which I did not really listen to, simply because I could tell how passionate she was about young children and how dedicated she was to the work that she was doing with teachers and children under the age of 5," Tanyel says. "So I tried to encourage her to continue, knowing that new doors would open for her."

The Franklin School has about 150 students from ages 6 weeks to 4 years

old. The school has Early Head Start, Head Start and 4K programs, along with market-rate/community-based tuition that gives priority to students on Spartanburg's Northside. The school was born out of community collaboration, and it relies heavily on its partnerships with groups like Spartanburg County First Steps, Piedmont Community Action and Spartanburg School District 7. Bynum has also started a parent advisory board.

And she's not done yet: Bynum hopes to one day get her master's degree so she can teach in Upstate's Early Childhood and Family Studies program.

"Ultimately, I would like to go further," she says. ■

College of Education

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A SPECIAL PARTNERSHIP

The University of South Carolina Upstate has a unique relationship with The Franklin School on Spartanburg's Northside.

The university has a classroom there for students in its Early Childhood and Family Studies program, and Upstate helped put cameras in each of the classrooms for the Early Head Start, Head Start, 4K and other classes.

That footage is used for ongoing, customized professional development for Franklin School teachers and also as a teaching tool for university students across the country.

"We access children without interrupting the classroom routines," says Dr. Nur Tanyel, chair of the

university's Department of Human Performance and Health. "Especially with children under the age of 3, when a stranger enters the room, it changes the whole dynamic of the room. It creates anxiety in the children. It's developmental. So the cameras give us access to children in their natural environment in a way that's not disruptive."

Twice a week, Tanyel and Franklin School Director Shawna Bynum, '18, hold "reflections" with Franklin School teachers. Together, they review classroom footage and discuss what the teacher is doing well and any issues they are struggling with. Tanyel then develops a few goals the teacher

can work on to strengthen their ability in the classroom.

If they faced a particularly challenging situation, teachers can request to review specific timeframes. If a child acted out, for instance, they can look for anything that might have triggered that behavior and talk about alternative strategies the teacher could have used.

Tanyel and Bynum also review footage to determine what kind of broad training to bring in for the entire 50-plus staff members at The Franklin School.

"This level of professional development is a game-changer for us," Bynum says. "We are so fortunate to have it."



Best and Brightest

Hubbell Lighting internship program attracts talented students from USC Upstate

At the end of her internship at Hubbell Lighting, Rachael Kalchbrenner, '14, found herself on stage facing 100 employees and the group president.

Kalchbrenner, who had spent the summer with the product management team, had to give a presentation about the project she had worked on and how it had impacted the business.

"As nerve-wracking as it is presenting in front of a group president, you really don't think that you're able to do it, and then you do it," says Kalchbrenner, who immediately after her talk was offered a second internship at Hubbell that led to a permanent job. "Being able to do a presentation like that was very valuable and has helped me out now."

Hubbell is one of many Upstate companies offering USC Upstate students meaningful work experiences that often lead to full-time jobs. Increasingly, employers have seen the value in making interns part of the team, where they contribute equally alongside employees.

"We've worked hard to build a firstrate internship program," says Garth Warner, vice president of human resources at Hubbell Lighting. "We're giving students real-world practical experiences and opportunities to see what it's like, not just to work at Hubbell, but within the field of their choice."

That was exactly the outcome for Marissa Keisler, '15, a business administration major, when she interned at Hubbell the summer before her December graduation. In fact, she says, the spreadsheets she developed as a product management intern are the same ones she uses in her current job at Hubbell.

"It's crazy, because as an intern, I had no idea that the work I was doing was real work and that four, five years down the road we'd still be using it," she says.

During her internship, Keisler focused on competitive comparisons, looking at how Hubbell's product line matched up with others, and doing cost-benefit analyses of product options.

"It was like putting a puzzle together and seeing how the whole business works from a numbers standpoint," she says.

Before she was even done with her internship, she had been offered a full-time job at the company. It was a product specialist position, focused on a different brand than the one she had been working on, but Keisler eagerly accepted the offer – even though it meant commuting back and forth to Greenville while finishing up her classes.

"I think it says a lot about the company that they were willing to say, we'll hire you and pay you a full-time salary and let you finish school at the same time," Keisler says.

Warner says it's not uncommon for Hubbell to hire interns on or to invite them back for a second internship. There are currently 17 USC Upstate alums or students working at the company. "The internship process is an extension of our recruiting activities," he says. "It's a long interview."

USC Upstate alums, from top, Johnathan Gray, '14,
Renata Caldwell, '12, and Marissa Keisler, '15, all
work at Hubbell Lighting in Greenville. Caldwell and
Keisler were hired on full time after interning with
the company, while Gray joined after prior internship
experience with another company.

For Renata Caldwell, '12, that process ran concurrently with her studies. During the last semester of her senior year, she was an intern three days a week for the marketing services department in Hubbell's commercial division and a student on the other two.

Caldwell already had an associate's degree in business marketing before she enrolled at Upstate, but she didn't want to be limited just to marketing. Her internship gave her the chance to coordinate national sales meetings that brought in people from all over the country and involved planning everything from hotels and food to speakers and event schedules.

At the end of her internship, Caldwell, too, was offered a full-time job, in the residential sales division, where she is now a strategic account manager. As someone who has worked with interns herself, she says she appreciates the philosophy behind Hubbell's internship program.

"You're given a job," she says. "If you're looking for an intern, you need to have room so this person can really contribute to your team. There's a purpose. If we're going to invest this money and time, what is the long-term benefit going to be for the company?"

Zane Gray, internship coordinator at Career Management at USC Upstate, says that for students still exploring different careers, internships are a great way to "test drive" some options.

"They help students find their identities and their goals in life, because you may find out, hey, this is not for me, or I'd like to be in this department," says Gray.

That was the case for Johnathan Gray (no relation), '14, a supply chain buyer at Hubbell. He didn't intern at the company, but prior internship and work experiences at Babcock Power helped him discover the area of business he was most interested in – supply chain management.

"Supply chain is very competitive," says Gray. "I get that competitive nature from back in high school, being involved in sports. I definitely thrive in a work environment where thinking of a competitive advantage is key."

Gray notes his prior work experiences

also taught him the value of networking. One of his former employees at Babcock Power, with whom he'd kept in touch, alerted him to the opening at Hubbell, and suggested it would be a good fit for him. "It's a great company to work for, and an industry leader, which made my decision easy," says Gray.

Hannah Terpack, the director of Career Management, says internships add value to both a

student's educational experiences and a company's workforce.

"The students are able to make a solid contribution early on, and the companies get this vibrant student eager to apply what they've learned," says Terpack.

And Hubbell recognizes the value in that relationship, says Warner, even if an intern doesn't come to work for the company as an employee.

"At the end of the day, my goal is, when they put Hubbell Lighting on their resume, it needs to mean something," says Warner. "I want people to know the quality of the work experience the individual got, what they're capable of doing, and that they should be considered in high regard as a result."







Former Amazon exec to discuss digital disruption

USC Upstate's George Dean Johnson, Jr. College of Business and Economics will welcome former Amazon executive and business strategist John Rossman as its 2019 Johnson Innovation Speaker.

An advisor, guest speaker, media analyst and author, Rossman is known for launching and scaling the e-commerce platform Amazon Marketplace, which has accounted for more than half of the units sold and shipped by the online retail giant. In fact, Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos referred to the platform as one of his "magical businesses."

"We feel privileged and are delighted to host John Rossman, one of the gurus of corporate innovation," said Dr. Mohamed Djerdjouri, dean of JCBE. "Mr. Rossman's expertise regarding the impact of emerging technology on new business models will help students and business leaders understand how the digital world may disrupt firms of all sizes and in all industries, and how these companies can scale and improve their technology-driven operations and business strategies."

Rossman served as director of enterprise services at Amazon, where he managed worldwide services for clients like Target.com, Toys R Us, Sears, Marks and Spencer and the National Basketball Association. In 2018, he founded Rossman Partners, a firm that advises leaders and boards on digital strategy, innovation and culture.

Earlier this year, Rossman's book Think Like Amazon: 50½ Ideas to Become a Digital Leader was published by McGraw Hill. His book



series, *The Amazon Way,* has garnered critical acclaim.

"What does being digital mean, how do we create a system for innovation, what type of leadership skills are needed to compete in the digital era, and what can we learn from a company like Amazon?" Rossman writes. "These are the questions most business leaders are asking themselves."

In its sixth year, the Johnson Innovation Speaker Series is dedicated to bringing distinguished business professionals to USC Upstate for the benefit of students and the local business community. Named for Spartanburg business leader George Dean Johnson, Jr., the series has hosted Dr. Derek Lidow, Esther Dyson, Dennis Hayes, David Pensak, Dr. Peter Roberts, Nicholas Glover and Robin Chase.



Robin Chase, founder and former CEO of transportation ventures Zipcar, Buzzcar, and GoLoco, was the featured speaker for the 2018 Johnson Speaker Series.

Business innovators take center stage at

Global **Entrepreneurship Week**

For a second consecutive year, the George Dean Johnson, Jr. College of Business and Economics (JCBE) brings a worldwide entrepreneurship initiative to the local community. Global Entrepreneurship Week, founded in 2008, is celebrated internationally each November by more than 10 million entrepreneurs in more than 170 countries.

"We are delighted to celebrate Global Entrepreneurship Week for a second year," said Brian Brady, an instructor and director of USC Upstate's GreenHouse Business Incubator at JCBE. "Small business drives the Upstate's economy and we are excited to use our resources to foster entrepreneurship in the Upstate by supporting startups and helping them scale."



Lt. Gov. Pamela Evette

Jennifer Evins

The week showcases three panel

discussions. The first, on women's entrepreneurship in the Upstate, features South Carolina Lt. Gov. Pamela Evette; Jaime Wall, partner at WJ Partners LLC; and Robin Hussa Farrell, co-founder and CEO of Sharpen, a participant in the GreenHouse.

The second panel, moderated by Allen Smith, president and CEO of the Spartanburg Chamber of Commerce, examines how entrepreneurship helps drive economic development in the Upstate.

Finally, JCBE will partner with Spartanburg's Chapman Cultural Center to present a panel on growing entrepreneurism in the arts. The event, "How Artists and the Creative Community Can Grow Revenue and Connect to Capital," will be held at the new Mayfair Art Studio in Spartanburg's Arcadia community. Jennifer Evins, president and CEO of the Chapman Cultural Center, moderates a conversation with Steven Johnson, regional manager of the South Carolina Research Authority, and Edris Tucker, financial development manager with CommunityWorks. Kristin Whiting, an art lawyer and consultant, will also speak.

Events conclude with an alumni showcase during which C. Dan Adams, '83, of The Capital Corp., Chip, '78, Smith of Blue Ridge Log Cabins; Jack Robinson, '84, of Volunteer Box LLC; and Mark, '80, Hinson of Instream share their stories about the paths they took to grow their respective businesses.

George Dean Johnson, Jr. College of Business and Economics

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Nevertheless, she persisted

Dr. Kerrie Wilkins-Yel, '08, delves into why more women aren't in STEM careers.

Kerrie Wilkins-Yel has built a career she loves in research, but her professional life almost took a different turn.

As a high school student in Jamaica, Wilkins-Yel, '08, was enthusiastic about engineering and hoped to pursue her interest at a college overseas. But as she began applying, the advice she got was, "Let's try starting off with something easier."

"At the time, I didn't really question it," says Wilkins-Yel. Laughing, she adds, "I applied for business administration, and that was the major I got accepted into, but if there was ever a major that didn't jive for me, that was it!"

While her initial major didn't work out, her choice of college fortunately did, and her experiences at USC Upstate would lay the groundwork for her current research on factors that impact women's success in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) careers.

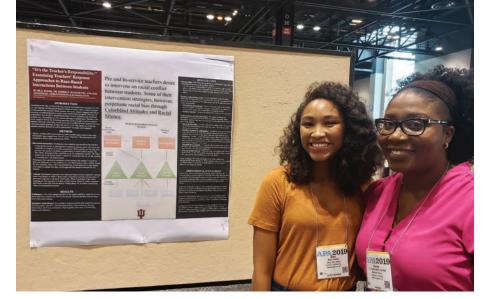
Wilkins-Yel, an assistant professor of counseling psychology at the University of Massachusetts Boston, is currently in the second year of a three-year project funded by a National Science Foundation grant. She and her coprincipal investigators are examining how support affects women of color who are pursuing STEM careers.

There's no one-size-fits-all approach, Wilkins-Yel explains. Women as a group may find certain types of support more helpful than others, but a Latina may have different needs than an African American woman – perhaps a mentor who is also a woman of color, perhaps the support of family.

"We're saying we really want to advance persistence among women, but in what ways is it different," she

Kerrie Wilkins-Yel, '08, assistant professor of counseling psychology at the University of Massachusetts Boston, is researching how support affects women who are pursuing STEM careers.





Kerrie Wilkins-Yel, right, with Indiana graduate student Blair Baker, with whom she made a presentation at the American Psychological Association convention in Chicago in August.

says. "There are these gendered experiences in STEM, and there are also these racialized components."

It's a topic near to Wilkins-Yel's heart, since she knows firsthand what a difference support – in multiple forms – can make.

When Wilkins-Yel arrived as a freshman in 2004, she immediately felt part of the USC Upstate community. A warm and personal welcome from Admissions Director Donette Stewart set her and her mom's minds at ease about the transition.

"There was a lot of comfort in the family environment that we felt, the connectedness of the community, and the responsiveness of the administrative folks." Wilkins-Yel recalls.

In fact, she says, she developed so many new friendships, "I didn't really have this massive experience of crying and wanting to go home!"

She also quickly became part of the network of international students on campus, which included one other student from Jamaica. It helped to not only have friends navigating the same new situations as she was, but also to know someone from her own country whom she could connect with.

Just as importantly, Wilkins-Yel met two women on the faculty who became her mentors. After switching her major to psychology, Wilkins-Yel met Kim Purdy, the current assistant vice chancellor of University College, and Jennifer Parker, director of the Child Protection Training Center, who opened her eyes to research possibilities.

"The whole trajectory of grad school

research to professor – those two were the very first women in my life who introduced me to that path," she says.

Purdy worked with Wilkins-Yel to develop her research idea on international students, find the data she'd need for it, and then present the paper at a conference, where, Purdy says, she "knocked it out of the park."

"She was just amazing," Purdy recalls. "She had a fire inside her, she knew what she wanted, where she was going ... You couldn't be around her and not just feel yourself be more excited about things she was working on."

Wilkins-Yel says Parker challenged her to explore unfamiliar research areas, and enlisted her help on a summer youth leadership project that led to a paper the two published together. Parker also encouraged Wilkins-Yel to pursue her work in graduate school, and helped her identify master's programs with a doctoral track.

"Giving voice and empowering our students to ask questions and solve problems are lifelong skills for success," says Parker. "Women, especially women of color, have not always been afforded these opportunities. Kerrie-Ann is a role model in this regard."

At Arizona State University, Wilkins-Yel decided to explore more deeply the kind of messages women receive about pursuing STEM careers. She joined a team of graduate researchers who identified the first and second years as critical ones for women in graduate school STEM programs.

"It's not about competence or capability – women are making it into

the program," Wilkins-Yel says.
"But then women encounter a host
of gendered and racialized experiences
in these academic environments that
chip away at and erode feelings of
self-confidence."

Having a community is important for many women in STEM fields she says. For some, that means female peers or mentors who they can talk to. For others, particularly women of color, it's finding women who look like them and come from similar backgrounds.

To that end, Wilkins-Yel has taken an active role in creating those communities. She's the founder and director of the I CAN PERSIST STEM initiative, an Indiana-based program that provides support and resources for high school, college, graduate and professional women of color in STEM-related fields. The goal is to ensure women stay in their programs, thereby creating a pipeline of talent to business and academia and providing inspiration for the young women who follow.

Though Wilkins-Yel is now teaching in Boston, she is continuing to oversee I CAN PERSIST and has received institutional support to start a branch in her new home in the upcoming 2020-21 academic year. The work is personal to her, she says, because she wants to see other women who love STEM pursue their passion, and avoid the kind of discouragement she initially received.

"There's a level of meaningfulness for me when you don't have to choose another path because of the difficulties encountered ... or because folks told you that this wasn't for you."

Buried Treasure

Informatics yields rich rewards for those who do a little digging to find it

One of USC Upstate's best-kept academic secrets stepped into the spotlight earlier this year.

When the Chronicle of Higher Education ranked four-year public institutions that were the best at enrolling and graduating women in computer science-related fields, USC Upstate came in at No. 7.

That came as a surprise to some on campus, but not to Ron Fulbright, professor of informatics and engineering systems. While women graduates in computer information systems remain low – just a handful every year – the informatics department graduates close to 40 to 50 women every year, Fulbright says.

And that's been true since the inception of the program, he says. He notes at least half, if not more, of the majors are women. The program is also a diverse one — about half of all majors are African American.

One significant reason for this, he believes, is simple: good jobs, and lots of them.

Back in the early 2000s, he explains, "The local business community came to the university and said, 'We need a new kind of graduate. We like your computer science graduates, but we need a student who can do more than just technology."

What was needed, Fulbright says, were graduates who were "tech savvy, but well-rounded in communication and business skills particularly."

The informatics program was developed to produce those graduates. While the general public might be unfamiliar with the term, informatics is the study of information – what it is, how you store it, how you analyze it, what you analyze it for, and the privacy and ethical issues around those things, Fulbright explains.

At Upstate, there are two undergraduate tracks, information management systems (IMS) and health informatics. Both attract a diverse group of students who may like computers, but aren't that interested in programming, Fulbright says.

That was the case for senior Jasmine Breland, who says she always loved computers, but "couldn't see myself sitting there and coding all day."

Before switching to IMS, she had been in computer information systems, but it wasn't quite the right fit. While she did well in her classes, all her time was devoted to staying on top of the material. "I literally had no life," she says.

Then she talked to Fulbright, who suggested she try IMS. She took one of his classes, and from that moment, "I fell in love with the major."

"I realized I didn't think like everybody else," she says. "When I was in that class I was like, yeah, I belong here."

She loves the problem-solving aspect of the field, which gives her the chance to think beyond basic solutions. When Fulbright posed a situation to the class about how to get drones to drop discs that wouldn't harm the environment, Breland ran with it, proposing discs made out of clay that could dissolve into the soil and nurture it.

"With CIS, you have to run a program until you get it right," she says. "With IMS, there's multiple ways to solve your problem. It's not just one right way."

Yet until Breland talked to Fulbright, she had never heard of the IMS major. That remains a challenge for the program, says Fulbright. Informatics is something students tend to find after they've enrolled at Upstate, rather than something they come here specifically to study.





Ron Fulbright, professor of informatics and engineering systems, helped launch the Informatics program at USC Upstate in the early 2000s. From the start, he says, at least half the majors have been women.



At the beginning of the program, he says, nursing and computer science tended to be the pipeline to informatics. Students might take a computer science class and not like programming, or find themselves struggling in a nursing class, and look around for related alternatives. Technical school students also fed the program, Fulbright says.

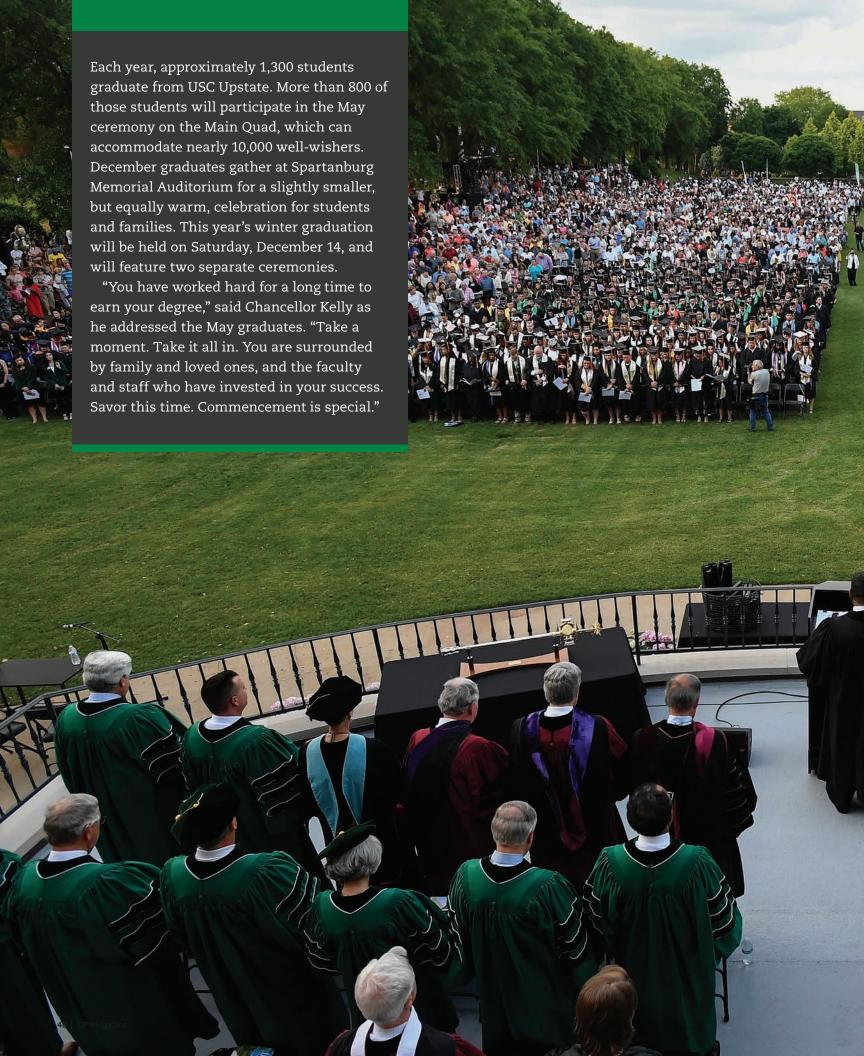
Now, he says, "We still live off transfers, but we're getting more and more walk-in students," albeit in smaller numbers than Fulbright would like.

That could potentially change as more people begin to realize how the degree prepares you for a wealth of job opportunities, Fulbright says. Several years ago, BlueCross BlueShield did a study showing the state would need almost 3,000 new professionals every year to meet demand and fill jobs left by retirements. Yet South Carolina as a whole is only producing a few hundred each year, Fulbright notes.

At college fairs, Fulbright says he often pitches to parents the opportunities informatics can offer their child, since he finds many parents already work in information-related fields, even if they weren't trained specifically for those jobs. Fulbright also has a list of job titles he carries around that illustrates the variety of careers: systems support analyst, quality assurance analyst, IT support, project manager.

"I tell students, if you like programming, you can sit down and write a program all day long. If you like hardware, you can fiddle with that all day long," he says. "But if you don't want to be behind a desk and you like to talk to people, there's a job out there for you, too."

Breland's dream job? Cybersecurity analyst.





Conference Calls

James Holland, '82, joins his alma mater in the Big South

When USC Upstate men's basketball hall of famer James Holland, '82, played for the Harlem Globetrotters during the 1982-83 season, one thing always made his heart swell with pride.

It wasn't the throngs of adoring fans cheering the team's display of athleticism, theater and comedy. It wasn't his association with Globetrotter legends like Fred "Curly" Neal and Hubert "Geese" Ausbie. And it wasn't the thrill of showing off his skills on a national stage.

It was the moment before each game when the announcer, in a voice that echoed over the arena's sound system, would introduce the players to the audience.

"It was very much like what they do before a game today in pro sports," Holland says. "The announcer would say something like, 'Representing the University of South Carolina-Spartanburg' followed by my name. That has always stuck with me. I was so proud to represent USCS, now USC Upstate. And I'm still proud to represent USC Upstate."

Holland is in his second year as senior associate commissioner for the Big South Conference. His tenure began in August 2018, shortly after his alma mater left the Atlantic Sun Conference — its first NCAA Division I cohort — and joined the Big South.

The native of Charlotte, N.C., is responsible for men's basketball and the conference's officiating alliance, as well as its softball administration and operationalizing Big South's strategic plan. Holland also oversees the





The floor at the G.B. Hodge Center was recently refinished to reflect USC Upstate's new athletic conference.

league's public relations, digital initiatives, marketing and branding.

Before Big South, Holland coached collegiate basketball for three decades. beginning at USC Upstate as an assistant under his former head coach Jerry Waters.

His longest coaching stint was as an assistant/associate head coach at San Diego State from 1993-99.

Other stops in his career include the University of Georgia, where he was an assistant and helped lead the Bulldogs to NCAA Tournament appearances in 2001 and 2002, and a Southeastern Conference East Division title in 2002: and The University of Texas at El Paso, where he spent two years as an assistant helping the Miners earn a Western Athletic Conference title and NCAA Tournament berth in 2005.

The following year, Holland was inducted into the USC Upstate Athletics Hall of Fame. He also joined the University of Alabama under head coach Mark Gottfried.

He credits his experience at USC Upstate with helping set him on a path to success.

"There has been significant growth at Upstate," Holland says. "It has gone from four buildings - where it was when I was a student - to a beautiful, sprawling campus. I am really impressed by the leadership of Chancellor Brendan Kelly, Athletic Director Daniel Feig and others. I think the growth speaks volumes about the leadership."

Holland ran cross country and played basketball at Garinger High School in Charlotte. He initially planned to attend Lenoir-Rhyne University, but says that halfway through his senior year in high school, the coach who was recruiting him was dismissed.

Holland's high school coach knew former USC Upstate head coach Bill Hinson.

"I came down and worked out," he says. "I talked to my parents and made the decision to join USC Upstate. It was the second-best decision of my life. The first was marrying my beautiful wife. Rhonda."

When Holland arrived for his freshman year in 1978, the university didn't yet have on-campus housing. He remembers that athletes lived in an apartment complex off Bryant Road.

"When we came in, it was really interesting," he says. "They hadn't had a tremendous mount of success. I give coach Hinson a lot of credit because he really developed what became the nucleus of our team."

Holland explains that during his first two seasons, the team experienced a lot of "growing pains," because it was comprised of young, inexperienced players. During his junior year, however, the team finally started to realize its potential.

Waters replaced Hinson after the 1979-80 season. He led the team to the NAIA national tournament in 1981, where it was knocked out after losing its second game. The team returned the following year and claimed the university's first and only national championship.

"My senior year was really kind of a blur," Holland says. "There was a certain amount of expectation because we had gone to nationals. Once we

won that second game, everyone just kind of relaxed. We had improved. We were just able to enjoy the moment. We won the next three games and the national championship."

Holland recalls that during his playing days, colleges and universities with strong basketball programs were still competing in the NAIA. Those teams included the College of Charleston, Winthrop and Wofford.

"For a few years, there was some really competitive basketball being played at the NAIA level in South Carolina," he says.

Holland credits his teammates and their willingness to put the team's goals ahead of personal glory as the reason for its success.

"I don't think I've ever seen it happen any other place where a team accomplished so much in such a short period of time," Holland says. "We have this tendency to think that things that happen quickly are easy ... You need talent, but it's always the group that's willing to sacrifice individual statistics and awards for the team that is the most successful."

Holland says he keeps in touch with his former teammates, including Doug Lightbody, Wendell and Mike Gibson, and Odell Cleveland.

"Coaching took me all over the country, but we've managed to stay in touch," he says. "I'm proud of them, not just as teammates, but as people."



Sports Standouts

Track and Field

- 1 Adanma Uzor was named the Big South Conference Indoor Most Outstanding Field Performer of the Year for 2019. Uzor, the first female athlete to garner this honor, was a two-time conference champion in the triple jump and runner-up in the long jump.
- 2 Angelnique Bryant was named the Big South Indoor Freshman of the Year for 2019. She is the first USC Upstate athlete to earn this distinction. Bryant won the 60 meters at the Big South Indoor Championships and set a new conference record in the 100 meters at the Big South Outdoor Championships. Bryant represented USC Upstate at the NCAA Regionals in Jacksonville, Fla.
- **3 Tony Auguste** was the Big South champion in the hammer throw. He currently holds the Haitian national team's record.

- Jared Henderson, Antoine Nance, Cameron Smith and Javin Holston were Big South champions in the men's 4x100 meter relay.
- **4 Tanner Saunders** qualified for the NCAA Regionals in the 400 meter hurdles for the second time in his career.

Baseball

USC Upstate boasted the top two hitters in the Big South Conference in 2019. **J.J. Shimko** led the league with a .369 batting average and earned a second-team all-conference nod. **Jeff Taylor** was second in the league with a .360 batting average and first-team all-conference selection.

- **5 Jordan Marks** and **Sean Hup**p both played in the New England Collegiate Baseball league. Hupp was named an All-Star.
- 6 Julian Rip was a member of the Netherlands U-23 team at the

European Championships in Prague, Czech Republic this past summer.

Softball

Alyssa Oakes was named the Big South Player of the Year in 2019 after recording a school record 73 RBIs. She was named the National Player of the Week on April 9.

7 Christina "Barbie" Biggerstaff was named Big South Pitcher of the Year after she went 25-4 in the circle for the Spartans. The senior ranked first nationally in shutouts and ranked in the top-15 in era, strikeouts and wins. Biggerstaff is now the pitching coach at Charleston Southern University.

Biggerstaff, Oakes and Brittany Case earned NFCA All-Region Honors in 2019

8 USC Upstate was ranked No. 24 nationally by the NFCA in team GPA for 2019. Fourteen Lady Spartans were



named All-American Scholar Athletes by the NFCA earlier in the year. This past summer, **Elisa Cecchetti** qualified for the 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo as a member of the Italian national team.

Golf

9 Jordan Warnock was named to the Big South All-Conference team in the spring and participated in the NCAA Regionals this past summer. Warnock and fellow senior Hunter Frye were named Golf All-American Scholars earlier in the year.

O Anna Chanthaphaeng was named to the Big South's All-Academic Team.

Pan Paksanont won the Spartanburg County Women's Amateur

Championship during the summer.

Praew Nontarux was named the Big South Freshman of the Week four times this past season, which was a

new school record.

11 USC Upstate's women's golf team broke three school records this past season en route to a win at the Winthrop Invitational.

Basketball

Riley Popplewell won Big South Scholar Athlete of the Year honors for a second consecutive year.

Riley Parkhurst attended the National Women's Leadership Conference this past spring. She is the current USC Upstate NCAA Student-Athlete Advisory Committee president. The men's team earned the NABC's Team Academic Excellence Award in 2019.

Soccer

The **women's team** defeated crosstown rivals Wofford for the first time in the program's history this season.

12 Abbie Ellis set a new school record for career goals.

Cam Philpot '18 was named a United Soccer Coaches Men's Scholar All-Region selection.

Cross Country

The men's cross country team had a pair of top-two finishes this past season with a win at the Upstate Invite. Jonathan Johnson captured two top-ten finishes this past season and was named a Big South Runner of the Week.

The women's cross country team had two top-five finishes this past season. Mia Davis led the team with a top-four finish.

Volleyball

13 USC Upstate's volleyball team received the American Volleyball Coaches Association's team academic award this past season. ■

Heavy Hitter

New baseball coach Mike McGuire brings record of success

When the USC Upstate baseball team takes the field in February 2020, it will officially be the beginning of a new era.

Unofficially, that era has already begun, as the Spartans have welcomed a new leader to Cleveland S. Harley Baseball Park.

In June, USC Upstate Athletics Director and Vice Chancellor for Intercollegiate Athletics Daniel Feig announced Mike McGuire as the new head coach of the Spartans baseball program.

Only the fourth head coach in the program's history, McGuire joined USC Upstate after seven seasons as head coach of Morehead State University in Kentucky, where he led a program that was known for punching well above its weight class at the NCAA Division I level.

"I'm excited," McGuire says. "I thought USC Upstate presented a lot of opportunities, not only in terms of its baseball program, but potential in a variety of other areas off the field as well. This place could be a gold mine. There are a lot of things to be excited about; a lot of things to promote."

McGuire's teams at Morehead State compiled an overall record of 228-187 and a conference record of 118-91, including an average of 37 wins per season during the past five years.

Since 2014, the Eagles amassed 183 victories, which ranks in the Top 40 nationally. They defeated 10 nationally ranked opponents and were champions of the Ohio Valley Conference (OVC) and NCAA Regional Participants in 2015. The program also boasted three freshman All-Americans,



two first team All-Americans and four pre-season All-Americans.

That isn't too shabby for a university with a total enrollment of just over 10,000 students.

Before joining Morehead State, McGuire was head coach at Louisburg College, an assistant at Winthrop University, and a head coach at Lander University. He enjoyed success with each of those programs.

"We're just finishing up our fall practices and it was a great opportunity to get to know the players," McGuire says. "Evaluation is an ongoing process ... But I'm encouraged so far by what I've seen. These young men are eager to learn; wanting to grow. One of the things we have been saying is that we have to keep progressing. We have to keep getting better."

Under McGuire's tutelage, nine players have been drafted by Major League Baseball clubs and 13 Morehead State players have signed professional contracts. Overall, he has coached more than 58 players who joined the professional ranks and 25 All-Americans.

McGuire has brought in two of his former standout players and one longtime assistant to help him mold USC Upstate's program.

Adam Brown, who coached alongside McGuire all seven seasons at Morehead State and two at Louisburg, has joined as associate head coach and recruiting coordinator. Kane Sweeney, who was part of the Eagles' 2015 OVC Championship team and later drafted by the New York Yankees, has joined as an assistant/hitting coach. And Patrick McGuff, who had a stellar career at Morehead State, was drafted by the Minnesota Twins and played for the Cincinnati Reds and Arizona Diamondbacks, has joined the Spartans as a volunteer assistant coach.

"I was very fortunate to be able to put such a great staff together here," McGuire says. "Each coach brings something different to the table."

Feig says he was "thrilled" to welcome McGuire because of his expertise, local recruiting ties and record of success. But he is especially excited about McGuire's ability to help players develop both on and off the field.

"Coach McGuire has experienced unprecedented success at each stop along his coaching journey," Feig says. "Each institution — beginning at Winthrop as an assistant, then Lander University, Louisburg College and Morehead State University as a head coach — experienced the winningest

Ronda Shirley Hired to Lead Volleyball Program

season in its history during coach McGuire's tenure. Equally impressive is his off-the-field record. Coach McGuire is committed to developing his student-athletes in the classroom and for the challenges of life after graduation."

McGuire says he wants to win. He wants to take the program to the post season and to regionals — somewhere it has never been. But he also has a laser focus on building the team's character.

"One of the things we talk about is who we are as a program," he says. "We want to be known for how hard we compete; we never quit. To beat us, you're going to have to collect all 27 outs ... All of our players want to play pro ball. For some of them, that may not happen. But they may all become fathers, husbands, and employees. I want them to develop the work habits and competitiveness that will serve them later in life."

And, McGuire says, players with those traits help build the reputation of a program.

"It's so important to me that they be good representatives for USC Upstate on and off the field," he says. "I want people to view this program as one that succeeds in the classroom and on the field ... We have a chance to write a new history here."

McGuire played professionally for the Zanesville Greys, a Class A Frontier League affiliate, from 1993-1994. He helped the Greys win the League Championship in 1993. McGuire played collegiately at the University of South Carolina from 1992-1994 and the University of Akron from 1990-1991.

McGuire is a graduate of both the University of South Carolina (1994) and Morehead State University (1996). He is married to the former Angela Kearns of Heyworth, Ill., and together the couple has three daughters, Courtney, Sydney and Sarah.



USC Upstate Director of Athletics Daniel Feig announced earlier this year that Ronda Shirley was selected as the new head coach of the Lady Spartans volleyball team.

Shirley, a 2015 NJCAA Coaches Association Hall of Fame inductee, joined USC Upstate after two seasons at Navarro College, where she coached the Bulldogs to 65 wins and an appearance in the 2018 NJCAA Division I Volleyball National Championship Tournament.

A 1992 graduate of Brown Mackie College in Salina, Kansas, and 1995 graduate of Kentucky Wesleyan, Shirley recorded 600 wins in 19 seasons as a head volleyball coach prior to her appointment at USC Upstate.

"Throughout her collegiate head coaching career, coach Shirley has averaged 30 wins per season and has had tremendous success on the court," Feig says. "She builds personal relationships with her players that transcend volleyball and extend after graduation ... I look forward to watching her develop our young women into champions on and off the volleyball court."

Shirley has coached five conference Players of the Year, 12 Academic All-Americans and seven conference Freshmen of the Year. She also had 53 All-Conference, 36 All-Region and 15 All-American student-athletes.

"I am excited and honored for the opportunity to lead the volleyball program at USC Upstate," Shirley says. "The excitement surrounding the direction of the athletic department and the support from administration were key factors in my decision."

Shirley began coaching in 1995 at Brown Mackie, where she was named Coach of the Year in 1998. She and her husband, Jeff, have six children. ■



USC Upstate kicked off the 2019-20 basketball season in October with Havoc at the Hodge. The men's and women's teams were introduced during the festivities, which also included an intersquad scrimmage, a 3-point shooting contest and a dunk contest.





Sparty's Ball and Auction

Saturday, March 28, 2020 | 6:30 p.m.

Eddie and Ann Payne Arena

G.B. Hodge Center, USC Upstate

Join us for a casual, fun-filled evening of great food and libations, live music, and live and silent auctions while mingling with your favorite Upstate Spartan coaches and student-athletes.

Event proceeds will provide transformative opportunities for our student-athletes in their pursuit of a top-tier education and competitive success.

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