university of south carolina aiken

CAROLINA'S

Promise

THE CAMPAIGN for the UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA
Today’s students represent the next generation of leaders – in South Carolina and beyond. At the University of South Carolina Aiken, we strive to maximize each student’s individual potential through high-quality teaching and personal attention in programs that enrich the cultural and economic life of our region.

With a strong foundation of excellence, close community partnerships, and a highly engaged faculty and staff, USC Aiken is well positioned to continue our 50-year-long tradition of excellence and success.

Ranked as a top regional public college in the South by U.S. News & World Report for the past 14 years, we offer an outstanding education to a diverse, talented student body. And in today’s increasingly complex world, we must be more focused than ever on providing our students with the experiences and the resources they deserve.

As USC Aiken celebrates our 50th anniversary, we are rededicating ourselves to going forward with the strong support of our alumni, neighbors, and friends.

“...over the next few years, we should increase our total enrollment to 3,600 – but do so with a managed plan that maintains the best of our current educational experience. This will require aggressive recruiting strategies, further improving our freshman-to-sophomore retention rate, and continuing to advance our academic success strategy programs. Today, we’re on the right path.”

- Thomas L. Hallman, Chancellor
"I proposed to act on my belief that regardless of a family’s financial condition, education should be available to every child in the United States—as much education as he could absorb."

- Lyndon Baines Johnson

"A college degree," says longtime Aiken resident Lionel Smith, "is a huge stepping stone to a better life."

That’s why Lionel and his wife, Dot, have provided scholarship support to USC Aiken students for over 20 years. "There are students who have great potential, but need a little financial help to get their degrees,” says Dot Smith. "And the community should support their local school."

With two children who are University alumni, the Smiths know the value of a USC Aiken education. So in addition to the general scholarship support they’ve provided for years, in 2006 they founded the Lionel and Dot Smith Scholarship for promising students who face financial barriers to attending college.

One of the most personally rewarding aspects of their contributions is meeting the students whose educations they’re supporting, like current Lionel and Dot Smith Scholarship recipient Lane Booth. "It means a lot to see, first hand, what a difference financial assistance can make to these young people," says Lionel Smith.

It’s why, adds Dot Smith, "Everyone should give back according to their ability."

For 87 percent of our students, financial aid is a factor in making a college education possible. Your support can help keep a USC Aiken education affordable and allows the next generation of South Carolina’s leaders to reach their dreams.

"The Lionel and Dot Smith Scholarship has meant so much to me. This scholarship has enabled me to attend college with the peace of knowing I have support from an outside source. I really appreciate the generosity of Mr. and Mrs. Smith and their continued support of me in my endeavors here at USC Aiken."

Lane Booth
USC Aiken Business Major
There is nothing which can better deserve our patronage than the promotion of science and literature.

- George Washington

What do Egg McMuffins, Doritos, and Coke have in common with USC Aiken? Each has benefited from the work of chemistry Professor Chad Leverette.

As an analytical chemist in the private sector, Leverette helped develop or enhance a range of products for companies like McDonald’s, Ruby Tuesday, and Coca-Cola. And as a professor at USC Aiken, he has shared his passion for science with hundreds of students, inspiring them to follow in his footsteps.

Leverette’s gifts as a teacher earned him the South Carolina Governor’s Professor of the Year Award, while the outstanding quality of his research led to his recognition as one of the USC system’s “Rising Stars.”

Leverette decided to leave the private sector for an academic career in part because USC Aiken felt like a perfect fit. “I specifically wanted to work at a school where teaching was the main focus, but also where the kind of research I was interested in is encouraged.”

For a university of our size, we have an enviably low 15:1 student-faculty ratio; our average class size is just 16 students. Your support can help us maintain that high level of student-faculty interaction, and help us attract and retain scholars whose leading-edge work models high-level professional success for our students.

“The neat thing about the sensors we at USC Aiken are developing for uranium detection is that they are created by our undergraduate students. Our students enjoy knowing that the projects they are working on have actual applications that are important and that outside groups want us to work on these projects.”

Chad Leverette USC Aiken Professor
“A school is not a factory. Its raison d’être is to provide opportunity for experience.”
- James Lloyd Carr

No doubt about it: For schoolchildren, math and science can be intimidating. But USC Aiken is determined to change that by partnering with local industry and public schools through the Ruth Patrick Science Education Center (RPSEC).

Designed to enhance math and science education in elementary and secondary schools, the center offers a hands-on approach that’s designed to help young people experience the beauty and power of science. And the joy of discovery.

For local schoolchildren, one of the most memorable aspects of a trip to the center is a show at the DuPont Planetarium, which offers an impressive array of programs that allows them to explore the wonders of the cosmos.

And for USC Aiken education majors, the center offers a wealth of resources as they train to become our next generation of teachers. For example, they can access more than 400 science and mathematics kits and supplies to take into local schools while student teaching.

The RPSEC exemplifies USC Aiken’s commitment not just to improving our students’ educational experience, but also to enriching our community. With your support, we will be able to enhance existing programs like the RPSEC and accelerate the development of promising new ones.

“Seeing children get excited about science and math is a wonderful thing. By supporting the DuPont Planetarium at the Ruth Patrick Science Education Center, I feel I can play at least a small role in inspiring the next generation of young people to see the possibilities to make a difference in the world around them.”

Sarah Patterson
USC Aiken Donor
“The young love and cherish people and places from which they receive the skills and emotional support that enable them to make it in the world or to meet their basic human needs.”

- James P. Comer

What kind of difference can the right space make?

Just ask any student-athlete who has played in USC Aiken’s new Convocation Center. Or ask the leaders of the Peach Belt Athletic Conference who selected the Center to host its 2008, 2009, and 2010 basketball tournaments.

The state-of-the-art practice facilities and 4,000-seat main arena provide our basketball and volleyball teams with an environment conducive to maximizing the potential for success. And the Center also serves as an excellent site for major campus and community events such as concerts and graduation ceremonies.

Funded by both public and private sources, including loyal alumni, the Convocation Center exemplifies the difference philanthropic support makes in our efforts to create the facilities our students deserve. Without the generous contributions of our friends and alumni, we would not have this magnificent facility that has already become such a vital hub of campus life.

Throughout its 50 years, USC Aiken has constantly put existing facilities to the best possible use, while coping with a continual need for new, more up-to-date facilities. Now that need is crucial. Our faculty, staff and students deserve the best spaces possible for experimenting, discovering and creating. With your help, they will have them.

Tiffany and Jason Stapleton, ’03 and ’01
USA Aiken Alumni

“USC Aiken was a very special place for both of us. It allowed us to grow as individuals and as leaders, to really reach our potential. It is now our privilege to give back to our alma mater which gave so much to us.”
There’s a good chance you remember James Dallas, ’83 graduate, as a star player on the Pacers basketball team. Dallas sees his accomplishments differently. “As an undergraduate at USC Aiken,” he says, “I felt like a person first, a student second, and an athlete third – even though I was there on a basketball scholarship. They celebrated academic success with the same fervor that they did athletic success. I was a student who played basketball, not an athlete who was a student.”

Dallas’s success in the classroom has translated into success in the boardroom. Today he serves as senior vice president, quality and operations for Medtronic, Inc. It’s a long way from the humble beginnings that made his basketball scholarship a necessary precondition to a college education, and that’s one reason he now gives back to his alma mater.

“There are plenty of students at USC Aiken who can benefit from the kind of assistance I got while I was there,” he says. “Now it’s my turn to give people a hand up. People saw something in me that I didn’t see in myself. They knew I just needed a little help. It’s my responsibility to do that for others.”

Support from alumni and friends like you makes a critical difference. With state funding now providing approximately 10 percent of our budget, it is private support that allows us to attract and retain the best faculty, to keep a USCA education affordable, and to create truly transformative experiences for our students.
To attract quality students – and to ensure that they receive the education they deserve – we must continue to build and expand opportunities provided by merit and need-based scholarships, athletic scholarships, and study-abroad scholarships.

Did you know...
• With a minority population of more than 30 percent, USC Aiken has one of the most ethnically diverse student bodies in the region, closely matching the demographics of South Carolina as a whole.
• 18 USC Aiken students have been recipients of USC’s prestigious Magellan Scholarships, which fund original undergraduate research.
• 90 percent of our students hail from South Carolina, with the rest coming from all over the nation and the world.

Our students are best served by highly qualified, highly committed faculty and staff. Aiken leads the USC system in donations from faculty and staff, with more than 90 percent of our employees giving to USC Aiken, even in recent tough economic times.

The creation of new endowed professorships will go a long way toward attracting and retaining the best teachers and scholars. These coveted positions help recruit faculty who will literally transform the intellectual life of the campus and the community.

And did you know you can make a big, positive difference for USC Aiken? Your support during the Carolina’s Promise campaign will help us continue to bring the best scholars and teachers on board, and in turn enhance the education of thousands of deserving and enthusiastic students.

"The object of education is to prepare the young to educate themselves throughout their lives.”

- Robert M. Hutchins
“The yeast of education is the idea of excellence, and the idea of excellence comprises as many forms as there are individuals. The school must have as one of its principal functions the nurturing of images of excellence.”

- Jerome S. Bruner

As our student population has grown, so too has our menu of academic and extracurricular programs. Importantly, the impact of our programs is felt far beyond the campus itself; USC Aiken is a hub of intellectual, cultural, and athletic activity for the Central Savannah River region.

Over the next few years, we seek to boost a number of critical programs that will support student research initiatives, provide state-of-the-art academic equipment, enhance campus life, and provide more opportunities that will help our students develop their leadership potential.

To make our range of programs as impactful and effective as possible, we must also assure that our talented students and committed faculty have facilities that are not simply adequate but, as far as possible, outstanding. As our student population expands, our need for additional classroom space is a pressing priority.

Your support of our programs, services and facilities will make a critical difference in our efforts to provide students with the comprehensive and stimulating college experience they deserve, and to enrich the cultural and intellectual life of the larger community.

“Not unlike student athletes, music students are expected to keep a full schedule of rehearsals and performances in addition to a full academic course load, and most are not able to work while in school. Outside funding for scholarships makes it possible for these students to support themselves through college and allows them to devote more time to mastering their art.”

Lauren Meccia
Director of Bands at USC Aiken
“One thing that’s really special about the USC Aiken story is our relationship with the local community – a relationship that’s grown constantly deeper and stronger over the past 50 years. We are proud to have such strong community support and proud to be recognized as such an asset to the community.”

Thomas L. Hallman, Chancellor

As we celebrate the 50th anniversary of our founding, all of us who love and support USC Aiken can take pride in how the university has thrived in its first half century.

From modest beginnings in one downtown building, we’ve evolved into one of the largest campuses in the USC system. From our initial community of three professors and 139 students, we’ve more than become a large and diverse four-year university, with more than 40 degree programs and over 3,000 undergraduate and graduate students.

And we owe our success not just to those on this campus but also to the Aiken community at large. It was the citizens of Aiken who first voiced the need for a local institution of higher education. From that moment on, every step along the way, the community has stood shoulder to shoulder with us, and community partners have been instrumental in our growth.

Our relationship with the community is truly one of our greatest assets.

When I reflect on our history and what we’ve accomplished in the past 50 years, I can’t help but be excited about the future. The Carolina’s Promise campaign represents a unique opportunity to build on our momentum – to do even more for our students and for our community. Please join us on our quest for excellence.

To lend your support, please contact:
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