

## Chancellor's Corner



**Dr. Susan A. Elkins, Chancellor**  
USC Palmetto College

As we wrap up this historic year of 2020 – a year certainly like no others in most of our lifetimes – let me begin by thanking each of you again this semester for your extraordinary service, especially since our world changed drastically earlier this year in mid-March. Thanks to your ability to quickly adapt and do such great work, we have had a very successful 2020!

To provide an update on our COVID-19 response and our many successes this year, we hosted a Virtual Town Hall and Holiday Coffee event on Dec. 10, with over 100 participants from across Palmetto College. We realize schedules are very hectic, especially during this time of year, and that many of you were not able to attend. So, the event was recorded and is available to view [here](#). Also, in conjunction with the holidays, a small token of appreciation – a Palmetto College “Coffee Break” – has been prepared for each of our Palmetto College family members and has been distributed to your campuses for you to pick up at your convenience. If you have an opportunity, pick up your Coffee Break and enjoy it as

*Chancellor's Corner, continued page 18*

## Lancaster, Salkehatchie, Sumter TRIO Programs awarded UofSC Presidential Coins of Excellence

The U.S. Department of Education has announced that the USC Lancaster, USC Salkehatchie and USC Sumter will each receive a federal Student Support Services (SSS) grant of \$1,675,500 – more than \$5 Million cumulatively to Palmetto College Campuses – to help more students succeed in and graduate from college.

The grants will be used to support the Opportunity Scholars Program (OSP), which helps college students who are low-income, first-generation (those whose parents do not have a four-year college degree) or students with disabilities. In addition, all

*TRIO Programs, continued page 15*



In September, UofSC President Bob Caslen presented Presidential Coins of Excellence to Latoya Robinson (USC Salkehatchie) and Matt Williamson (USC Lancaster) for their work in supporting income-challenged and first-generation students through the TRIO program.

## USC Lancaster ranked No. 2 community college in the United States

*All four regional USC Palmetto College campuses rank among top five in S.C.*

The University of South Carolina's four regional Palmetto College campuses lead the pack among the state's community colleges in the 2021 Niche Best College rankings.

In its national list of 2021 Best Community Colleges, Niche ranked USC Lancaster No. 2. In the list of 2021 Best Community Colleges in South Carolina, Niche ranked all four regional Palmetto College campuses: [No. 1 USC Lancaster](#), [No. 2 USC Sumter](#), [No. 3 USC Union](#) and [No. 5 USC Salkehatchie](#).

“We are pleased to see that the entire nation sees the value in the education and opportunity afforded to students at USC Lancaster,” said University of South Carolina President Bob Caslen. “And, that South



Carolinians are able to fully recognize the value that USC Lancaster, USC Sumter, USC Union and USC Salkehatchie bring to students in their service areas.”

“These Niche rankings reaffirm the value of the University of South Carolina educational experience,” added USC Palmetto College Chancellor Susan

Elkins. “The regional Palmetto Colleges offer South Carolinians an opportunity to pursue an accessible and affordable higher education within their respective communities.”

The four two-year regional Palmetto College campuses – USC Lancaster, USC Salkehatchie, USC Sumter and USC Union – collectively enroll over 5,000 students within the Allendale, Lancaster, Laurens, Sumter, Union and Walterboro communities. The campuses confer associate degrees to graduates and partner with baccalaureate-granting USC institutions to offer the flexibility to complete bachelor's degree programs on campus or via Palmetto College Online.

*Niche.com, continued page 4*

**South Carolina PALMETTO COLLEGES CONNECTIONS**  
Fall/Winter 2020

**Chancellor's Corner**

**Lancaster, Salkehatchie, Sumter TRIO Programs awarded UofSC Presidential Coins of Excellence**

The U.S. Department of Education has announced that the USC, Lancaster, Salkehatchie and Sumter will each receive a federal Higher Education Excellence in Research (HEER) award of \$1.075 million – more than \$3 million combined to Palmetto College campuses – to help them address research and graduate from college.

The grants will be used to support the Opportunity Scholars Program (OSP), which helps college students who are low-income, first-generation (those whose parents do not have a four-year college degree) or students with disabilities. In addition, all 1980 Program students will receive a very successful 2020.

To provide an update on our COVID-19 response and our many successes this year, we hosted a Virtual Town Hall and Virtual Coffee event on Dec. 10, with over 100 participants from across Palmetto College. We welcome feedback on your behalf, especially during this time of year, and that we are not able to attend. So, the event was recorded and is available to view here. Also, in connection with the holidays, a small index of appreciation to a Palmetto College "Coffee Buddy" – has been prepared for each of our Palmetto College family members and has been distributed to your campuses for you to pick up as your convenience. If you have an opportunity, pick up your Coffee Buddy and enjoy it as a holiday gift.

**USC Lancaster ranked No. 2 community college in the United States**  
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The University of South Carolina's four regional Palmetto College campuses lead the pack among the state's community colleges in the 2021 Niche Best College rankings.

In its annual list of 2021 Best Community Colleges, Niche ranked USC Lancaster No. 2. In the list of 2021 Best Community Colleges in South Carolina, Niche ranked all four regional Palmetto College campuses No. 1.

Lancaster, No. 2 USC, Sumter, No. 3 USC, Union and No. 4 USC, Salkehatchie.

"We are pleased to see that the entire nation sees the value in the education and opportunity being to students in their service areas."

"These Niche rankings reaffirm the value of the University of South Carolina educational experience," added USC Palmetto College Chancellor Susan

# USC Sumter's Rowlett contributes to book celebrating 100 years of women's suffrage

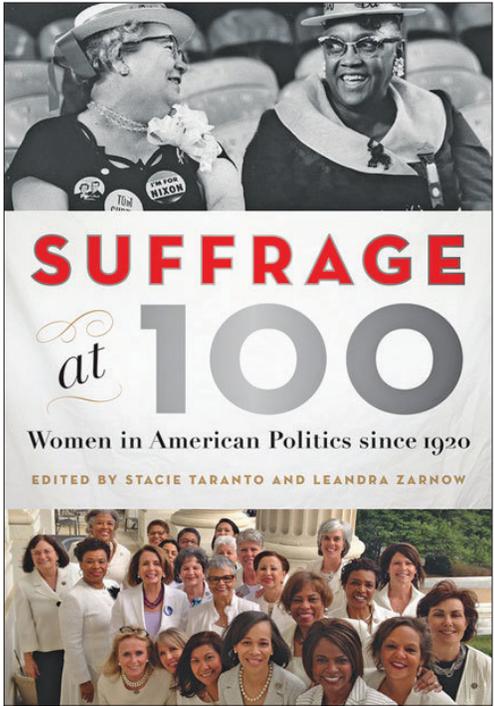
The 19th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, extending legal voting rights to women, celebrated its centennial anniversary this year. In honor of the achievement of women's suffrage, the Johns Hopkins University Press recently released "Suffrage at 100 – Women in American Politics since 1920."

The Press' website describes the book as exploring "why women's access to, and influence on, political power remains frustratingly uneven, particularly for women of color and queer women. Examining how women have acted collectively and individually, both within and outside of electoral and governmental channels, the book moves from the front lines of community organizing to the highest glass ceiling."

The book, edited by Staci Taranto and Leandra Zarnow, highlights women's participation in U.S. government and politics over the past century and includes chapters contributed by 22 scholars. One such contributor is **Dr. Bianca Rowlett**, an assistant professor of history at USC Sumter.

Hailing from Green Forest, Ark., Rowlett attended Arkansas Tech University and graduated cum laude with a Bachelor of Science in Biology. She was then accepted to the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville, where she began to pursue a Master of Science degree with a focus on Molecular Biology. After a year in the program, Rowlett decided the lab was not where she wanted to be. She took a break from school and worked in banking before finally returning to earn her Master of Arts in History in 2007. In 2014, Rowlett went on to earn her Ph.D. in history and, in 2016, Rowlett was hired to teach history at USC Sumter.

Rowlett's chapter in "Suffrage at 100" focuses on Dr. Jeane J. Kirkpatrick who was appointed by President Ronald Reagan as the Permanent Ambassador to the United Nations in 1981. Until that time, women were not widely known for planning, creating, or implementing important foreign policy



directives. Kirkpatrick, a political science professor at Georgetown University, was the first American woman appointed to the position of Permanent Ambassador to the U.N., as well as the first female to serve on the National Security Council (NSC) and the National Security Planning Group (NSPG). This chapter emphasizes the accomplishments of America's first female diplomatic power broker by analyzing her contributions to both foreign and domestic politics.

Though rejected by modern feminists due to her affiliation with Republican politics and her opposition to the methods, ideology, and policies promoted by feminist organizations, Kirkpatrick saw herself as a feminist who supported gender equality, specifically, the advancement of women in American politics, diplomacy, and society. Her influence and leadership helped break through gender barriers that previously prevented women from attaining the highest of diplomatic positions, thus paving the way for female secretaries of state from both parties including Madeleine Albright, Condoleezza Rice, and Hillary Clinton. Overall, Kirkpatrick's contributions to foreign affairs and domestic politics make her an iconic figure that should be highlighted in any study dedicated to the history of women and American politics.

Please submit all items for the Spring 2021 issue no later than Tuesday, April 13, 2021.

The **USC Palmetto College Connections** newsletter is published biannually, at the conclusion of the spring and fall semesters.

If you have an interesting story to share with the USC Palmetto College community, please share the news with the following contact for your respective area:

**USC Lancaster**  
Shana Dry – drysf @ mailbox.sc.edu

**USC Salkehatchie**  
Stephanie Gruber – grubersi @ mailbox.sc.edu

**USC Sumter**  
Alethia Hummel – alethiah @ uscsumter.edu

**USC Union**  
Annie Smith – alsmith @ mailbox.sc.edu

**Palmetto College Columbia**  
Jean Carrano – carranoj @ mailbox.sc.edu

**Palmetto College Online**  
Jason Darby – jdarby @ sc.edu

# USCL nursing grads enter workforce amid COVID-19 pandemic

This past spring, USC Lancaster celebrated its largest number of graduates ever in the Bachelor of Science Nursing program.

Twenty-four graduates joined the workforce just as the first wave of the COVID-19 outbreak began to intensify.

Two of the new nurses [spoke to local CN2 News](#) about what's next for each of them.

**Dillon McDonald** and **Brittney Staton** say they've known they wanted this career for many years now. They're both inspired to become nurses because of their own personal experiences with family illnesses.

They both agree that USCL's nursing program was tough, juggling classes and clinicals, but they're ready to join medical professionals on the lines who've been battling COVID-19.

"I think it's definitely a scary time because there's a lot of uncertainty of like when it's going to end, if it's going to end, if it's going to come back," nursing graduate, Dillon McDowell, said. "Every year now is there something that we're gonna have to deal with

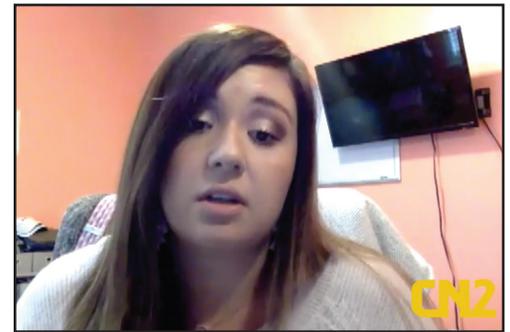
in future years, which is a good possibility that it is. But, like I said, it's something that we kind of signed up for to be on the front lines to deal with that kind of emergency situation."

Nursing graduate Brittney Staton indicated that she is ready to get out there and help during this pandemic because it is very draining on nurses that are in the field.

"We have that passion in us able to help others and we're just wanting to push through and be able to get out there and... work for so that we can help others. And I think that's what keeps me going and what keeps me inspired. To know that I'm not only going to be helping patients that are suffering, but also helping to take some of that burden from some of those nurses that are actually out there putting their lives on the line."

Brittney and Dillon say they have a passion for helping others and believe going into their field amid a world pandemic will actually be a rewarding experience.

They say helping other medical professional and patients during this time will be a benefit to everyone.



Brittney Staton



Dillon McDonald

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## Palmetto College Columbia's Hjelm watches COVID-19 pandemic unfold from overseas sabbatical

While most of the USC Palmetto College community watched the current COVID-19 pandemic unfold across the United States at the cusp of spring, one Palmetto College Columbia faculty member watched the events unfold from across the Atlantic Ocean.

**Dr. Mary Hjelm**, Professor of English, experienced the spring months of the global pandemic while on sabbatical in England. Her academic specialty is in Shakespearean drama, particularly the comedies. Hjelm was looking forward to participating in festivities surrounding the 90th birthday celebration of preeminent Shakespearean scholar Sir Dr. Stanley Wells. Those plans were altered, in part, by the national lockdown precipitated by the virus spread.



Mary Hjelm

Hjelm shares her experience in England as the pandemic advanced:

"I spent the first seven months of 2020 in England, locked down tightly for most of it, but I managed to enjoy it in a weird way. The English version of lockdown was much stricter than here in the United States.

From the middle of March through the beginning of June, all businesses (except doctors' offices, pharmacies and grocery stores) were shut. People were not allowed to leave their homes except for one hour a

day of outdoor physical exercise daily. No group activities of any kind for more than four people were allowed either, with no traveling to family members' homes – no church, no weddings, reunions, funerals, wakes or christenings. Those with "essential jobs" were allowed to go out to work, but everyone who could was encouraged to work online. Train services were reduced to get essential workers only in and out of major cities, and automobile traffic was stopped and rerouted if the travel wasn't deemed vital. The pollution over London diminished to early 20th Century levels due to the lack of cars on the road. Masks, of course, were required from the very beginning.

I would walk from my flat along the canal to the boat basin just outside of the Royal Shakespeare Theater next to the main street where the closest grocery store was located. Sometimes I would walk around the River Avon's banks to the Holy Trinity Church and through the churchyard there. Lovely stuff. The English love their green spaces and, because there was no other place to go, they flocked to the river walk. It was lovely to see them enjoy those places in small groups and socially distanced.

Because healthcare is paid for by the government, a huge effort was made to protect the system so it wouldn't be bankrupted by the pandemic. It was heartening to see how people worked to help where they could and to encourage healthcare workers. To help protect workers and those people who considered to be especially at risk, thousands of retired doctors and nurses returned to work, sports venues were

Hjelm sabbatical, [continued page 15](#)

# USC Sumter summer science camp celebrates tenth anniversary

USC Sumter celebrated the tenth anniversary of its Mad About Science Summer Camp this summer. Due to the ongoing pandemic, this year's camp was offered online and free of charge aside from the supplies that students purchased to participate in the experiments.

The virtual camp, held June 22-26, was geared towards students ages 9-14. Campers logged in daily to a Zoom meeting to participate.

The camp exposed students to cell and marine biology, virology, environmental science, genetics, biochemistry and physics. Participants conducted scientific experiments with household items and explored the environment in which we live. The facilitator, **Dr. Dan Kiernan**, has been a biology instructor for 12 years at USC Sumter and guest presenters included USC Sumter faculty Austin Jenkins (naturalist) and Mark Roberts (marine biologist).

Kiernan has led the science camp for all ten years that it has been offered. Kiernan came to USC Sumter in 2008 after working

at Georgian Court University in New Jersey as a laboratory coordinator and adjunct professor. Prior to this, he spent four years in Michigan, where he taught at Lake Superior State University and obtained an M.S. in biology at Central Michigan University. In the late nineties, he taught high school biology in both the public and private sectors after obtaining a bachelor's degrees in education and biology. In 2015, Kiernan earned his Ph.D. in secondary (science) education from the University of South Carolina.

When not teaching or conducting research, Kiernan is an academic advisor, oversees USC Sumter's Student Government Association



Dr. Dan Kiernan assists campers with an experiment at a previous camp.

and Christian Collegiate Ministry, works with students on independent research projects, is annually involved with South Carolina Junior Academy of Science, organizes science camps for local school children in the Sumter area and presents at various venues.

## Niche.com, *continued from page 1*

USC Lancaster, which ranks No. 2 nationally and No. 1 in South Carolina, is emblematic of the experiences shared among the regional Palmetto College campuses in the University of South Carolina system. USC Lancaster invests in a variety of programming and support structures to enhance the student experience on campus and to provide students with resources to make them successful. For example, Lancaster provides free tutoring in all academic disciplines, enriched academic advising, the TRIO Opportunity Scholars Program for first-generation students, as well as personal and career counseling. Supporting academic encouragement, the college offers a student food pantry and clothing closet that exists to meet the needs of students who need additional assistance in reaching their personal and academic goals. USC Lancaster has held onto its No. 2 national ranking for several years.

In a recent Niche.com review, one student shared "I believe USC Lancaster is a five-star campus because they create a personal connection with everyone they meet. They take the time to help everyone and anyone. They truly do care for all students, faculty, and staff

members. USCL has been my home for two years now and I would not rather go to any other school for my first two years of college."

In addition to those efforts to reach students beyond the classroom, the regional Palmetto Colleges are important resources within their respective communities. USC Sumter hosts Swan Con, Sumter's annual comic arts festival, on its campus. USC Union sponsors the annual Upcountry Literary Festival for poets, musicians, novelists, oral storytellers, playwrights, essayists and short-story writers. The USC Salkehatchie Leadership Institute prepares community members for leadership roles to help stimulate economic development in its five-county service territory. USC Lancaster's Native American Studies Center offers a comprehensive resource for study of South Carolina's Native American peoples, their histories and cultures.

Community outreach among regional Palmetto College campuses also includes college preparation and guidance for K-12 students and their families. Most of the campuses serve as hosts to University of Possibilities, a guidance program designed to prepare sixth through 12th-grade students

and their families for college. And, high school students within these communities have an opportunity to begin taking courses for college credit.

Niche analyzes more than 3,000 colleges to create rankings and "Niche Grades" for all aspects of campus life, including academics, student life and value. [The "2021 Best Community Colleges in South Carolina" ranking is based on a rigorous analysis of academic, admissions, financial and student life data from the U.S. Department of Education along with millions of reviews from students and alumni.](#)

Niche also grades institutions on several other factors, including academics (40 percent), value (27.5 percent), professors (7.5 percent), student life (5 percent), campus (5 percent), diversity (5 percent), local area (2.5 percent) and safety (2.5 percent). The student surveys are self-reported by Niche users.

Niche.com is a website that facilitates the discovery of schools and neighborhoods for its users through analysis of dozens of public data sets and millions of reviews to produce comprehensive rankings, report cards and profiles for every K-12 school, college and neighborhood in the United States.

# Van Hall celebrates 50 years of teaching at USC Lancaster

Not too many educators can say they've taught generations of students at the same institution. One USC Lancaster professor is celebrating 50 years of teaching.

**Dr. Richard Van Hall** started his teaching career at USC Lancaster in the fall of 1971, 50 years ago at the age of 28, starting his career only a few years after the school's founding in 1959.

"Well, I do the things that I like to do – that is to say – I've always loved history and when I have had other jobs I try and sneak away and read history or think about history and to get paid for it is a delight. I said on many a previous interview that it's like getting paid for eating ice cream," says Van Hall.



**Dr. Richard Van Hall has taught at USC Lancaster since 1971, and he recently began his 50th year teaching history to USCL students.**

Van Hall is the longest-serving faculty member and over the years has taught thousands of students – who all share special memories of his classes.

they do.

[Watch a CN2 News interview](#) with Van Hall to see how this professor has become a USCL institution himself.

"It was just amazing how he could tell a story and I really liked that. I was a history major, liberal studies in history and I looked forward to his classes because you could just sit there for hours and listen," said S.C. District 45 Representative Brandon Newton, who also serves as an outreach coordinator for USC Lancaster.

Newton, formerly Van Hall's student and now colleague, said the professor has inspired his political career. USC Lancaster's leaders said Van Hall also inspires his colleagues to love what

## Connolly awarded Phillips Military Endowed Scholarship

At a small socially-distanced October 2020 scholarship luncheon, **Chance Connolly** was awarded the **Robert V. Phillips Palmetto College Military Endowed Scholarship**. Named for decorated WWII veteran Bob Phillips, the scholarship was established by his family to ensure that veterans and active-duty personnel would have additional financial support to complete their degrees.

A two-time recipient of the endowed scholarship, the 26-year-old Tennessee native Connolly is an active-duty serviceman enlisted in the United States Army. He is also a drill sergeant for high school dropouts at the South Carolina Youth Challenge Academy. Connolly is currently pursuing an Associate of Science degree with the UofSC Fort Jackson Program. He plans to pursue a degree in either social work or business and work in the medical field.

Launched by Joel and Rhonda Collins, the daughter of Bob Phillips, the endowed scholarship and the cause has picked much support from donors in the three years since it was established.

To be eligible for the scholarship, recipients are required to be active-duty service members,

National Guard or reserve members, veterans or spouses of active-duty service members. They are also required to be enrolled in the Fort Jackson Associate Degree program or the USC Palmetto College Online bachelor's degree completion program. A "last-dollar" scholarship, the Phillips fund pays the remaining balance of their tuition and fees after Federal Tuition Assistance or veterans benefits are applied.

Bob Phillips was born on Oct. 8, 1920, in Spartanburg, S.C. He graduated from Spartanburg High School with honors in 1938. Knowing it would be a financial burden on his parents to pay for him to attend college, he applied for and accepted a railroad position which had been recommended to him by his father.



**(From left) Attorney Joel Collins, two-time Robert V. Phillips Military Endowed Scholarship recipient Chance Connolly and USC Palmetto College Chancellor Susan Elkins. Joel and Ronda Collins established the scholarship in honor of her late father.**

After World War II began, Robert V. (Bob) Phillips was drafted on Oct. 5, 1942. He rode a bus to Fort Jackson and began his active-duty service in the United States Army on Oct. 19, 1942. He was promoted several times and rose to the rank of Technician Fifth Grade. After training at several bases, his

[Phillips Scholarship, continued page 11](#)

# McCaffrey joins UofSC as senior director of strategic partnerships for military and government programs

**T**odd McCaffrey, the new senior director of strategic partnership for military and government programs, is a retiring Army major general, who completed his military career as the chief of staff of U.S. Africa Command, a joint force headquarters located in Stuttgart, Germany.

[In October 2020, UofSC Today asked McCaffrey about the newly created position and the role of military-affiliated students and research on campus.](#)

## After a long career in the military, what brought you to the University of South Carolina?

I'm retired from the Army after 34 years. It was a great career and a wonderful experience that took me and my family around the world serving with the best America has to offer. As I looked at post military retirement opportunities, a couple questions grounded me. One was, 'What are my passions? What is my purpose and how can I serve in another way?' The other factor was that I knew I wanted something that would keep me tied to younger people and the energy and ideas that come from young people, and I wanted to be tied into a team. That combination of goals quickly leads you to higher education.

To be quite honest, I just wasn't seeking to go into the commercial sector or to the standard defense contractor role that a lot of senior officers do. That's not what I wanted to do. It didn't seem to fit my passion or purpose.

## Describe your new role at UofSC and the goals behind the position and the office.

There's a long job title that comes with the position, but I think it's best described as director of military affairs. I think the job as it's evolving has two major avenues. One is to assist in supporting, recruiting and growing the military-affiliated student population and supporting that population while they're here. That's active military members, veterans and dependents of military members.

The other avenue is tied to broadening the university's role in seeking government research efforts, particularly with the Department of Defense.

## What is your role in that?

My role is not only to come up with new ideas, my job is to help integrate the ideas of others as well and try to achieve synergy, provide added weight and potentially find greater success from those initiatives.

There are a whole bunch of great things already occurring at the university in veterans' initiatives and research; I'm trying to wrap a lasso around all of them to make them more tangible and visible.



Todd McCaffrey

## How large is the military population on campus, and why is it beneficial to increase the enrollment of military-affiliated students at the university?

We have an incredibly talented military and veteran student population here. It's somewhere around 1,200 to 1,300 military-affiliated students in Columbia

and I firmly believe that they are a positive value proposition for the university. Statistics show that those students typically perform at a higher level than their traditional peers — they have higher GPAs, they tend to come in with more maturity, and they tend to succeed at a higher rate. They also provide another important element of diversity for the university — diversity of ideas and experience that is helpful for the broader university population.

That student segment is often leveraging government entitlement education benefits. They provide an important stream of tuition to the university, but they have choices. They are a discriminating consumer group. They're looking for best value for their benefits. That value includes not only the quality of the education, but the price and the accessibility of that education as well. Those in the military are also a mobile group — they move every two to three years so they increasingly seek educational options that can follow them when they move — that often leads them to online offerings. The strategic plan for the university discusses growing military-affiliated student enrollment by 20 percent by 2025. That's a metric that I think recognizes the value of that population.

## Can you talk about the role research plays and highlight some of the defense department work?

This university has amazing capabilities in research across many of our colleges that the Department of Defense can leverage to meet its capability development needs. There are eight substantial military bases in South Carolina. South Carolina also sits very close to major commands for all five of the services so it's a great geographic location to do research and establish collaborative partnerships. Those are opportunities a lot of folks are already working on, and part of my role is to raise the visibility of that and broaden our opportunities.

The university has been building an active partnership with Special Operations Command in Tampa, Fla. That partnership has been ongoing for some time and it is in everything from Artificial Intelligence, to mobile power production and battery issues in the College of Engineering and Computing, to brain health initiatives that the School of Public Health has been working on. Those are of direct interest to Special Operations Command today and could very well be of significant interest to the broader services as well.

Another research opportunity has to do with what is becoming the Army's Cyber Center of Excellence at Fort Gordon, Georgia, right across the state line. There are potential partnership alignments with the College of Engineering and Computing with the work the Army is doing with cyber.

There's also the research that engineering and computing as done in power generation and distribution. These are critical, first world problems for the military these days. Efforts in these areas are a win for the university, a win for military, and frankly, a win for national security.

## What lessons did you learn from your military career that will help you as you take on this role at UofSC?

The military does not do a lot of lateral entry, so you generally have to come in as an enlisted service member or second lieutenant. So, across my 34 years of service, I've worked from the floor level to the executive suite. I've found that relationships matter and the relationships that matter most are based on

# STATE OF THE UNIVERSITY

with Bob Caslen

Uof SC

Learn more about military initiatives at UofSC in [Episode 2 of the new State of the University Podcast](#) (A salute to student-veterans). In this episode, UofSC President Bob Caslen and host Sally McKay have a conversation with Jared Evans, the university's director of military engagement and veteran affairs, and Ashley Johnson, a student-veteran in the College of Social Work.

## UofSC unveils new Veteran and Military Center of Excellence



From left: Brooks Herring, President Bob Caslen, Jared Evans and Scott Craig cut the ribbon to the new Veteran and Military Center of Excellence at the Horseshoe on Nov. 11, 2020.

character. What I've learned is character counts and trust is foundational. If you can't, at the end of the day, trust the guy or gal on your left and right, you have real issues, particularly in the business the military is involved with. Those principles apply at the university as well. I believe that any successful organization has got to be based on firm relationships grounded in trust. Trust allows an organization to empower its people. I've found that once an organization has empowered its employees, it can do amazing things.

### What has surprised or made an impression on you so far about the University of South Carolina?

As a new arrival, I've been so impressed with the welcoming spirit of the University of South Carolina. I'd heard about that hospitality before but was still pleasantly surprised experiencing it in person; everybody has been incredibly welcoming. The pleasant surprise, although not completely unexpected, is the amazing excellence of the talent here. I've been fortunate to be able to listen in on some of the ongoing Future Planning Group COVID discussions. Listening to the collaboration and professionalism amidst this crisis has been amazing. I've told people back in the Army, 'You've got to see how they're doing things here. This is remarkable.' There's amazing talent here, from students to staff and faculty, it's a remarkable team to be able to join.

By Megan Sexton, reprinted from [UofSC Today](#).

The university marked Veteran's Day with a ribbon-cutting ceremony to open the new **Veteran and Military Center of Excellence**, a "one-stop shop" for military-affiliated faculty and students to gather and access campus services.

"It's really an outreach of the university to our veterans," President Bob Caslen, who served in the Army for 42 years, said. "Really, in my opinion, it's to symbolically bridge the civ-mil gap that exists not only in our nation and state but right here on the university campus."

The center will be located on the first floor of the Byrnes Building on Sumter Street.

Previously, the campus had a location for veteran's benefits to be processed and a separate student veteran lounge in Thomas Cooper Library. The Veteran and Military Center of Excellence provides a consolidated location for these services, as well as others such as career and disability services.

"It truly is that centralized, one-stop shop location that can support our veteran and military population from the time of they're thinking about coming to USC to the time they graduate and go out into the workforce," Jared Evans, the director of military engagement and veteran initiatives, said. Evans also served in the Marine Corps.

The university is also working with community partners and the Department of Veterans Affairs to have a Veterans Affairs representative on site.

Scott Craig, a student veteran working to complete his degree in computer engineering, said before the center student veterans had to "run all over the campus" to access these services and that as "non-traditional students" they didn't have a place to settle on campus.

"It'll be nice to have a quiet place with people you can identify with to continue to succeed in Carolina," said Craig, who was awarded a Purple Heart for his Army service after medically retiring due to injuries.

The ceremony began with the presentation of the national colors by the university's ROTC detachment, followed by the singing of the national anthem by Brooks Herring, a student veteran and doctoral candidate in physical therapy.

Herring served in the U.S. Navy for six years and said he is "encouraged" and "inspired" by the evolution of the ways the university serves its student veterans in the past six years.

"Today at the University of South Carolina, we make a statement to our veteran and military family that we don't just know you're here. We are grateful that you are here," Herring said.

Caslen ended his speech asking the audience to reflect on the many sacrifices of the "men and women who have stood in the gap" this Veteran's Day.

"It's up to us to lead a life for which they have sacrificed for our freedoms and for what we stand for here as a nation," Caslen said.

By Marina Catullo, reprinted from [The Daily Gamecock](#).

# Palmetto College welcomes new faculty



**Udayamurthy Neelakantan**  
Non-Tenure Track Instructor  
USC Lancaster

M.S. in Biology  
University of North Carolina at Charlotte



**Sher Chhetri**  
Tenure-Track Assistant Professor\*  
USC Sumter

Ph.D. in Mathematical Sciences  
Florida Atlantic University

\*Previously a full-time faculty instructor.



**Todd Lekan**  
Tenured Full Professor and Associate Dean of  
Academic and Student Affairs  
USC Lancaster

Ph.D. in Philosophy  
University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign



**Suzanna Hall**  
Non-Tenure Track Instructor  
USC Sumter

M.S. in Chemistry  
University of South Carolina



**Soumyadip Acharyya**  
Tenure-Track Assistant Professor  
USC Sumter

Ph.D. in Mathematics  
University of Alabama



**Lukasz Szatkowski**  
Tenure-Track Assistant Professor  
USC Sumter

Ph.D. in Chemistry  
Lodz University of Technology, Poland



**Chase Aunspach**  
Non-Tenure Track Instructor  
USC Sumter

Ph.D. in Speech Communications  
University of Nebraska-Lincoln



**Sandy Phillips-Long**  
Non-Tenure Track Instructor  
USC Union

M.S. in Biological Sciences  
Clemson University

## Not Pictured

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**Whitney Bishop**  
Non-Tenure Track Instructor  
USC Salkehatchie

M.S. in Nursing Organizational Leadership  
University of South Carolina

**Daniel Stanforth**  
Non-Tenure Track Instructor  
USC Sumter

Ph.D. in Languages, Literatures,  
Cultures and their Applications  
University of Valencia, Spain

**Courtney Pinnell**  
Non-Tenure Track Instructor  
USC Union

M.S. in Nursing Education  
Western Governors University

In addition to new faculty and staff joining Palmetto College during an unprecedented time, several long-time faculty and staff members have announced their retirement.

“Congratulations to those who have served Palmetto College and the Palmetto College Campuses as they embark upon their next chapter. Their contributions have been invaluable and their efforts have made us a stronger organization better able to fulfill our core mission,” said Chancellor Susan Elkins.



**John Catalano**

**John Catalano**, Associate Provost of Palmetto College, retired from his role as USC Union Campus Dean, effective August 15, 2020. Over the years, Dean Catalano has contributed much to Palmetto College

and its predecessor – including a 33-year career at USC Lancaster where he also served as Campus Dean. He began serving USC Union as acting Campus Dean in November 2015.

Under his leadership, USC Union: (1) set an enrollment record each semester, more than doubling the enrollment; (2) reduced financial aid default rates to the second-best among regional Palmetto College campuses; (3) drastically improved facilities, adding and remodeling buildings and grounds; (4) negotiated an agreement with the Union Carnegie Library that has transformed student library services; (5) reapplied for the TRIO/Opportunity Scholars Program; Seen increased millage from Union County; and (6) added new sports to the Bantam Athletics program, a BSN program with USC Aiken, student housing through a public-private partnership, and received over \$1 Million in gifts and property.

Many of these improvements occurred while he simultaneously served as Interim Dean of Extended University (now Palmetto College Columbia) and as Associate Provost of Palmetto College. While he is stepping down from his role as USC Union Campus Dean, Catalano will continue to serve Palmetto College as Associate Provost.

Catalano has also earned the titles of Distinguished Professor Emeritus and Regional Campus Dean Emeritus at USC Lancaster. He also has received many awards for his teaching and civic activities – the most recent of which was a [Resolution by the South Carolina House of Representatives](#) in recognition of his service and accomplishments as Dean of USC Union.

## Thank you Palmetto College retirees for a job well done!



**Jane Brewer**

After a storied career spanning 43 years, USC Salkehatchie's **Jane Brewer** is retiring at the end of the year.

Brewer has held many positions at Salkehatchie. She started as a recruiter in 1978 in Allendale, the

only campus at that time, and soon moved up to Director of Recruiting, and then Director of Admissions, Records, and Recruiting. When the campus expanded to a new location in Walterboro a few years later, she began working to bring students to both locations.

Over her 43 years, Brewer has seen many changes at Salkehatchie, and she has helped both campuses grow and evolve. She has celebrated both Salkehatchie's 25th anniversary in 1990 and its 50th anniversary in 2015.

Eventually, Brewer served as both Associate Dean for Students Affairs and as Director of the Walterboro campus. As she became accustomed to wearing many hats, she was approached by then-Campus Dean Ann Carmichael about serving as Director of Athletics.

Under her direction, Brewer has seen the athletics program grow, adding new sports and winning two regional championships for the first time in school history – one in softball and one in men's basketball.

For many, Brewer has been the face of Salkehatchie – and with good reason. “She has dedicated her career to USC Salkehatchie. Whatever her title, she has always gone above and beyond to take on anything she could do to assist students and to help make our school successful,” Dr. Chris Nesmith, the current campus dean said. “We are so grateful for her hard work and dedication, and we will all miss working with her very much.”



**Robert Costello**

**Robert Costello**, Professor of Chemistry at USC Sumter, announced his retirement at the end of the summer. Costello served a full 40 years on the faculty of USC Sumter. The Regional Campuses

Faculty Senate (now the Palmetto College Faculty Senate) was a very important part of his life for his first 20 years at USC Sumter, culminating with service as RCFS Chair for the 1998-99 academic year. Costello plans to continue research activity and to publish archaeological research papers.



**John Abdalla**

**John Abdalla**, Instructor of History within Palmetto College Columbia, has announced his retirement after serving 26 years on the faculty. A two-time recipient of the Stephen L. Dalton

Distinguished Teacher Award for faculty teaching at the UofSC Fort Jackson Program in 2000 and 2008, respectively, Abdalla was inducted into the Mu Gamma Chapter of Alpha Sigma Lambda at UofSC in 2011. He was also a 2018 recipient of the Provost DLQR grant for design of online HIST 111 and HIST 112 courses. Abdalla is the author of the book “Allen King: World War II American P.O.W.”

# Pre-contact archaeology among the pandemic

By Ashley Lowrimore, Reprinted from the Fall 2020 edition of *Native American Studies Quarterly*

Washed out pathways. Ticks. Snakes. SARS-CoV-2? Archaeology digs have their share of hazards to watch out for, but the virus that causes COVID-19 is a first.

For another consecutive summer, Native American Studies Center Archaeologist Chris Judge and his team have excavated mounds along the Wateree River; thankfully, COVID-19 hasn't loomed too largely over the project due to the remote location of the site. New safety protocols were implemented in the field, including increased availability and use of hand sanitizer, disinfection of field tools at the end of each day and the wearing of face coverings for all workers and volunteers while on site during the June dig.

The site is believed to have been within Cofitachequi, a chiefdom-level society visited by three Spanish expeditions between 1540 and 1628. Previously, recovered artifacts included a bone fish hook, arrow points and fragments of broken pottery vessels.

This summer, students from the Governor's School for Science and Mathematics (GSSM) – Camryn Brown, Gracie Floyd and Emily Geraghty – participated in a six-week remote internship at the Center. The students have been helping Judge review data from the Johannes Kolb Site in Darlington, where he is trying to situate two burials dating back to the mid-17th century. The interns have collected data on Native American burial practices from the Carolinas, Georgia and Tennessee as part of their work and also got a chance to get hands-on experience at the dig.

Camryn Brown, a rising GSSM senior from Fort Mill, is researching the history, significance and the making of shell beads for this summer's research project at the GSSM. Brown worked remotely with the

other interns, who also worked on individual projects.

"It was a lot of adjusting because I go to a math and science school, so I had to get used to this type of research where it's really fluid and there's not always an answer," said Brown.

Brown is planning to study

to do in their lifetime."

Emily Geraghty, a rising senior at GSSM, worked at the site and spent the day helping the crew by assisting with equipment and checking for color changes in the soil that might show any clues of previous post holes, molds, or artifacts. For her summer project,



**South Carolina Governor's School of Science and Mathematics student Camryn Brown sifts soil through a mesh screen, looking for any artifacts. [Photo Credit: Chris Judge]**

environmental science after she graduates from GSSM and is thinking about taking some archaeology courses in college. She says she really enjoyed the day she spent working at the dig site, where she learned about environmental factors, how those factors are impacting the site and what techniques are used in the excavation process.

"I thought archaeology was this gentle, careful, sometimes tedious, work done with brushes. But, when it got down to it, we were shoveling dirt with shovels and putting it in screens," she said. "What also really amazed me was that we found a lot of potential artifacts. I thought it was amazing; it's something not everyone is able

Geraghty researched commingled mortuary practices.

"My goal is to go into forensic sciences," said Geraghty. "This was the closest I could get to a crime lab without being in an actual crime lab."

Though she would have preferred to work on-site at the Center this summer, Geraghty is making the best of this summer's unique situation.

"I've read a lot of books these past weeks and I've been putting together what I've found out about mortuary practices from those resources," said Geraghty. "We are doing a heavy focus on southeastern Natives and lot of them are in the Carolina area, some in Georgia, and some in

other places. It's a lot of remote learning."

As the global pandemic made remote learning the so-called new normal for many, GSSM also adjusted. The summer research requirement was made optional this year, though Dr. Karl Rohr, GSSM History Instructor, said connecting with the Center still provided opportunities for those students who wanted to conduct research.

"COVID-19 presented our entire GSSM community with significant challenges," said Rohr. "However, we transitioned to distance learning quickly and effectively. This shows that this new link between the Center and our school can present even more exciting opportunities when we return to a more normal environment."

GSSM students have been conducting mentored, in-person research for 30 years, says Dr. Josh Witten, GSSM's Director of Research and Inquiry; however, he notes there has been a silver lining among COVID-19's limitations.

"Because Mr. Judge was willing to work with GSSM students remotely on projects, additional students who would not have been able to work at the Center due to the distance from home could now participate and benefit from the opportunity," said Witten. "So, while the COVID-19 pandemic has reduced the opportunity to work with the NASC in-person, it has also provided an opportunity to overcome geographic limitations to allow student participation to focus on their interests."

Witten is responsible for connecting students with research mentors, for research internships during their junior and senior years.

"I first interacted with Chris Judge and the Native American Studies Center as part of an interdisciplinary January interim



South Carolina Governor’s School for Science and Mathematics student Emily Geraghty (left) and Dr. Gail Wagner record data at the archaeology dig site near the Wateree River. Geraghty is one of three students from the GSSM who interned at the Center this summer. Though they mostly worked remotely, the students did have the chance to volunteer and get hands-on experience at the site. [Photo Credit: Chris Judge]

course for GSSM about post-apocalyptic fiction writing and science,” said Witten. “We toured the Center to learn about the impact of European colonialism on Native American peoples and cultures, which has led to on-going interactions between the Center and GSSM, for example, through field trips for our Native American history class with Dr. Karl Rohr. This summer, we were able to extend that relationship to have GSSM students work with Mr. Judge as research interns.”

Rohr serves as faculty advisor for the students, helping them organize and prepare their research for papers and presentations throughout the year. He says the primary objective of the summer research program is

to give students the opportunity to grow both intellectually and professionally.

“During our time of heightened awareness of diversity and more inclusive historical narratives, NASC builds effective bridges between the past, present and future,” said Rohr. “This is the mission of the Center, and it blends naturally with the mission of our school. Our students’ passion for scientific research finds a human face with these projects, and they need not steer away from their passions for social science and humanities. I want to see students discover more about South Carolina history, and then make greater connections to understanding our world today.”

## BSN programs launching at Sumter, Union campuses

For the past few years, USC Sumter and USC Union have worked toward offering bachelor’s degree programs in nursing. Beginning in Fall 2021, both campuses will enroll their first nursing program students in partnership with the USC Aiken campus.

Students may enroll now as pre-nursing students and get a jump-start on their general education requirements for the degree.

Construction of a new, state-of-the-art nursing lab at USC Sumter is nearly complete and **Tina Simenson**, MSN, RN, was recently hired as the nursing administrator for the Sumter program.

“I’m very excited about expanding the opportunities for nursing education in Sumter and the surrounding areas of our community,” said Simenson.

USC Union completed its own facility at the end of 2018. The Union facility contains virtual labs that will allow students to explore with lifelike 3-D models that cover the entire human body.



## — Philips Scholarship, *continued from page 5*

unit, the 377th Infantry Regiment (part of the 95th Infantry Division), was ordered to deploy to England. They traveled aboard the USS West Point departing on Aug. 9, 1944. They arrived at Liverpool Harbor and were transported to Southampton, England, where they were loaded onto Liberty cargo ships. The Regiment landed via LCTs at Omaha Beach on Sept. 13, 1944. Phillips’ unit fought in Northern France, the Rhineland and Central Europe. After the war was over, they were assigned to and assumed occupational control of Recklinghausen, Germany. The Regiment departed the battered port of Le Havre, France,

on June 20, 1945, aboard the USS William H. Gordon arriving in Newport News, Va., on June 28, 1945.

Phillips was awarded the American Campaign Medal, WWII Victory Medal, Combat Infantryman’s Badge, Army of Occupation of Germany Medal, Honorable Service Lapel Button, the Good Conduct Medal and the Bronze Star.

Phillips was honorably discharged from the Army on Nov. 19, 1945. He returned to Spartanburg where he resumed his position at the railroad company and retired from what is now known as CSX after 45 years of service.

Even though Bob Phillips did not have the opportunity to obtain a college education, he strongly encouraged his two daughters to pursue college degrees, and they did. He even encouraged – and ultimately convinced – his wife to obtain a college education, and she did.

Bob Phillips would be honored and proud to know a scholarship bearing his name will provide soldiers at Fort Jackson and other veterans of the United States Army the help they need to achieve a college education through the USC Palmetto College.

# Around Palmetto College



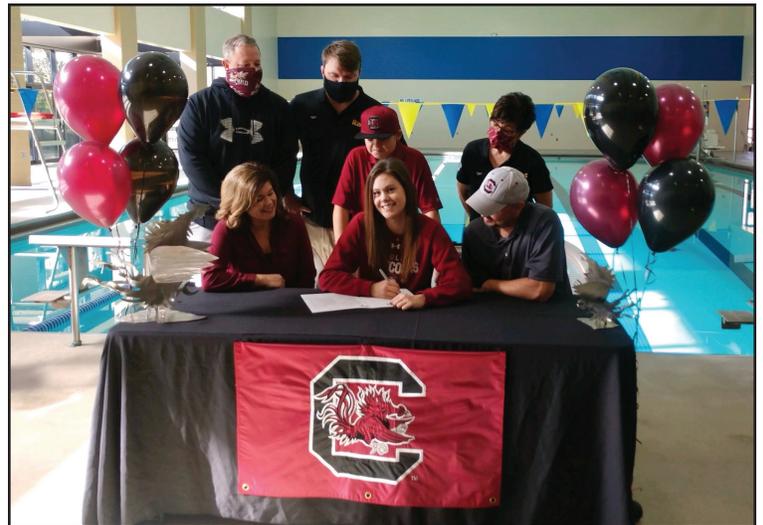
Congratulations to **Jennifer Connelly**, a student in Palmetto College Online's Special Education multicategorical program, on earning the Outstanding Intern Award. Dr. Judy Beck, Dean of the USC Aiken College of Education where the program is based, recently [presented the award](#) to Connelly in a special ceremony.



The **USC Lancaster Chemistry Club** participated in the Catawba Riversweep on Saturday, Oct. 3. They helped pick up garbage and litter from the highway and wooded areas near Fishing Creek. Together with many other volunteers, they helped to make the river a lot cleaner.



USC Union continues to grow its physical plant. This semester, the new **USC Union Student Services Building**, comprised of the Admissions and Financial Aid offices, opened on Main Street in downtown Union.



"The Dual Enrollment Program has enabled me, as a Buford High School student, to work toward my dreams of earning a degree from USC as well as swim as a USC Gamecock!," said USC Lancaster dual credit student **Makenzy Kaylen Mills**. She recently signed to compete with UofSC Swimming.

"I appreciate the continued partnership between the Lancaster County School District and the University of South Carolina Lancaster. For not only will I enter USC's Columbia campus with 30 academic credits and a 4.0 GPA, but I will also enter with a greater understanding of time management and personal responsibility. Go Cocks!"

# Sarah Ward: Onward and upward

Reprinted from *The Press and Standard*, Walterboro, S.C.



**Colleton County High School graduate Sarah Ward was recognized at her high school commencement exercises for earning both Associate of Arts and an Associate of Science (with highest honors) degrees from USC Salkehatchie, earning over 75 college credits while a high school student. Additionally, CCHS's top three graduates each earned over 50 college credit hours through the program.**

**S**arah Ward is 17-years-old and has lived in Colleton County all of her life. Like most typical teenage girls, she loves to shop and be with friends. But Sarah is anything but typical.

She just recently graduated from Colleton County High School. But she also graduated with an associate degree from USC Salkehatchie, the first person to achieve this at CCHS.

Sarah's academic resume is impressive. While in high school she was captain of the varsity cheerleading squad. She was the historian of Young Agents of Change and a member of the National Honors Society, HOSA, Educational Talent Search and Student Council. She is a recipient of four academic letters (3.0 GPA), four Golden PAW awards (4.0 GPA), two years All-American Cheerleader, one year Coaches Award (cheer), four varsity letters (Cheer), four years Academic Excellence (cheer) and Student-Athlete of the Month (February). And as a college student, she made the USC Salkehatchie Dean's List, Circle of Excellence.

Keeping excellent grades and excelling in extracurricular activities is enough for any student. But how did a high schooler receive an associate degree from college?

"When I first began my sophomore year, I remember being told by my guidance counselor that this was the year that kids could become eligible to take dual enrollment courses and start getting college credit. So naturally I embraced the opportunity. It wasn't until my

mom and I met with my guidance counselor Kathy Shider that we were reminded that someone could actually attain their associate degree through the program," said Sarah.

Even though an associate degree was possible, it had never been done before. And some classes that were needed for the degree were not offered at the high school. But Sarah was determined, and she made that degree her goal.

With the help of her family, her favorite staff member Mr. Johnson and Jane Brewer at Salk, she was able to achieve her goal. They were supportive and pushed her to do things that she wouldn't have done otherwise.

"Sarah Ward has set the bar high at Colleton County High School for many students coming behind her," said Shider, her counselor. "From an education perspective, Sarah's mother, Lorraine Ward, has always been an active parent in the lives of her three children in public education in Colleton County. We encourage all parents to take an active part in their children's education. Make it a point to visit your child's school and learn about dual credit."

Sarah said that her mother is her greatest motivator and has been a constant positive influence on her life. Her mother encouraged her to reach for the associate degree.

"I did this because I knew it would help save me money and time in school. When I get to college, I will have already completed the basics so I can start focusing on my major," Sarah

said.

Since her favorite subject is science, she plans to major in biology at the University of South Carolina in Columbia this upcoming fall. She then wants to attend medical school to become a pediatrician.

Attaining a high school diploma and associate degree at the same time wasn't easy.

"The hardest part of the experience I feel was ignoring the negativity. There were so many people who had doubts and felt the need to voice their opinion on what they thought was possible and what they thought I could handle. It was also difficult getting approval for everything — from being able to take classes on the campus, to being able to get registered for certain classes. I also had to make a lot of sacrifices, especially with my free time. I had to take summer classes, and during my senior year, I wasn't able to be at the high school at all. It was all pretty difficult, but worth it," said Ward.

"The best part of my experience was receiving my degree because when I finished it, it gave me a piece of mind to know that everything I had done and given up, up until this point, wasn't done in vain," she said.

Sarah realizes that she couldn't have accomplished everything without help. "I feel like I received the most help from Ms. Brewer at Salkehatchie. If I ever had a problem, without a doubt, she would help get it solved. There wasn't ever anything I couldn't do as long as I consulted with and left it up to her, so I'm very thankful for that," Sarah said.

At 17, she now only has two years left in college.

"I don't feel like I've lost out on the four-year college experience on campus. I believe I still have time to experience everything and get involved in what I want. In addition, I have also had the opportunity to participate in summer programs on the campuses of Claffin University and UofSC Columbia, where I stayed on campus in a dorm room and attended classes like an actual student," said Sarah.

"Take advantage of the opportunities made available to you by the high school and take the dual credit courses through USC Salkehatchie. It will take a lot of sacrifice, you will not have any free time, and no summer vacations. In order to earn an associate degree, you must put the time in," she added.

## Shelton hired as USC Salkehatchie softball coach

**S** **Siara Shelton** has been hired as the new head softball coach for USC Salkehatchie. Coach Shelton replaces Coach Kenneth Bellamy who moved to Mercer University, a four-year program in Georgia.

Shelton has a Bachelor of Science in exercise science from Limestone College and a Master of Science in college athletics administration from Coker University. While at Limestone College, she played softball all four years and was all-conference.

Most recently, the assistant softball coach



**Siara Shelton**

at Presbyterian College, Shelton also has experience as an assistant coach at Coker University and as a travel ball coach and a private softball instructor.

“We are thrilled to have Coach Shelton join the coaching staff at USC Salkehatchie,” said Salk athletic director Jane Brewer.

“Her past experience, along with her South Carolina connections for recruiting and her immediate connection to our current softball players make her a great fit for this job. We look forward to her continuing the winning ways Coach Bellamy

established here at Salk.”

Shelton said, “I am super excited to have this opportunity to be a part of this program. Coach Bellamy built a successful program and I cannot wait to see what this team does in the Spring. I am super thankful for director of athletics Jane Brewer and the rest of the hiring committee for this opportunity and trusting me with this amazing program. While there are so many people that I could list, I do want to mention how thankful I am for Limestone Head Coach Amy Yates and everything she has done for me from a player standpoint to now. I am ready to start this journey with this amazing group of girls and to see what lies ahead for us.”

## Fish adds another gold for the USC Union Bantam Rifle Team

**U** **SC Union Rifle Team Captain Brianna Fish** has added another gold medal to her collection. Fish won the medal in Sectional Junior Air Rifle Precision Standing during a National Rifle Association competition held in February in Walhalla, S.C. USC Union Interim Dean **Randy Lowell** presented the medal to Fish on Sept. 14 at Truluck Gymnasium. The presentation of the medal was postponed because of COVID-19 concerns. “This is very impressive,” Lowell said. “She is going to make a great future nurse as she works to get in the BSN program.”

USC Union Rifle Team Coach **Doug Gilliam** said Fish shot 60 rounds in the standing position – the most difficult shooting stance. Gilliam said Fish, a former Air Force JROTC National Champion, came to USC Union well-coached. “She works hard and is very motivated,” Gilliam said. “She comes to me and says, ‘Can I go practice?’ Gilliam said. Fish said she is enjoying attending USC Union and her classes.

Gilliam said he hopes the Rifle Team will grow in its second year at USC Union. He said school officials have been very supportive. He said a woman he does not know who lives in another city recently called and offered to the school the shooting jacket she used when she competed. “She said, ‘I am sending it to you for free,’” Gilliam said.

When he was coaching the Union County High School Rifle Team and taking them to competitions, he said that he often heard Fish’s name; she was a member of the Clover High School Air Force JROTC Marksmanship Team.



**USC Union Interim Campus Dean Randy Lowell, student Brianna Fish and USC Union Rifle Team Coach Doug Gilliam. Fish won a gold medal in Sectional Junior Air Rifle Precision Standing during a NRA competition.**

Competing for Clover, Fish won an Air Force Individual National Championship, Air Force Team National Championship and Orion Air Rifle League Air Force Championship. Fish also earned the highly coveted Distinguished Shooter Badge as well as many other awards and titles.

In 2019, Gilliam became the coach for the only club Rifle Team in the UofSC system and Fish became the only member. Fish qualified to compete in the National Championship at Fort Benning, Ga., in March, She did

this after outshooting the entire Clemson University Rifle Team Club in the Collegiate Air Rifle Sectional Championship match at the University of North Georgia in January. Clemson won the club championship the year before as a team and Fish outshot them. Only one person had a higher score than Fish, a Georgia Military College student who is a veteran shooter.

Gilliam said there is a good chance Fish will get to shoot against the entire Clemson team again as the season progresses.

eligible students must demonstrate a need for academic support. The array of services the grant will provide are comprehensive and include academic tutoring, financial aid advice, career and college mentoring, help in choosing courses, and other forms of assistance. Such services enhance academic success and make it more likely that students will graduate or transfer with the lowest possible debt. On average, OSP participants have higher grade point averages (GPAs) than traditional students with a 2.9 cumulative GPA, 88 percent in “Good Academic Standing,” 48 percent graduating with an associate degree and 41 percent graduating and transferring into a four-year academic program.

In honor of their work with the TRIO Programs on the Palmetto College Campuses, **University of South Carolina President Bob Caslen** presented UofSC Presidential Coins of Excellence to **Matt Williamson** of USC Lancaster, **Latoya Robinson** of USC Salkehatchie and **Lisa Rosdail** of USC Sumter.

“We are very excited to continue to serve our students at USC Sumter. They will need our support services more than ever, especially this fall, due to the COVID 19 pandemic,” said Rosdail, who serves as director



**In October, UofSC President Bob Caslen (left) presented a Presidential Coin of Excellence to Lisa Rosdail (second to the left) of USC Sumter for her work in supporting income-challenged and first-generation students through the TRIO program. Also pictured: USC Sumter Dean Mike Sonntag and USC Palmetto College Chancellor Susan Elkins.**

that their college peers have had and help students with disabilities remove obstacles preventing them from thriving academically.

For more than 50 years, Student Support Services programs like OSP have made important contributions to individuals and society as a whole by providing a broad range of services to help students succeed. This vital program can and does make all the difference.

of TRIO Programs at USC Sumter. “We are confident we can provide the assistance they need to be successful during this unprecedented time of remote learning as well as continue a 23-year tradition of meeting our program goals and objectives.

Federal TRIO programs include Upward Bound, Talent Search and Student Support Services, authorized by the Higher Education Act to help college students succeed in higher education. The programs recognize that students whose parents do not have a college degree have more difficulties navigating the complexity of decisions that college requires for success; they bolster students from low-income families who have not had the academic opportunities

## Hjelm sabbatical, *continued from page 3*

converted to emergency hospitals, and volunteers were solicited to deliver medication and food parcels. The government asked for 100K volunteers and 600K showed up! Every Thursday night for about eight weeks, people would stand in their doorways to clap in appreciation for the NHS [United Kingdom National Health Service] workers. You could hear it all over neighborhoods. It was lovely to be a part of it. Also, one young woman would stop by the old-persons’ home two doors down from me every week to sing from the garden to all of the residents indoors. She had a lovely, trained voice and you could hear show tunes all over the neighborhood. Wonderful fun!

Beginning in early June, stores began to open again but it was very slow. Restaurants and pubs didn’t reopen until the first part of July. (I went 114 days without a restaurant meal! Horrors!) Some gardens associated with National Trust Houses and Museums reopened about then too, but not very many. I did get to see the Cotswolds and Blenheim Palace because friends drove me there.

Most of my time was spent at home. But because the English are a theater rich people, several theater companies released archived productions online and on television to keep interest high and as fundraising opportunities to help support out-of-work actors and crews. Thanks to that, I was able to see 38 Shakespeare

productions in addition to those I saw before the lockdown closed all the theaters (plus four non-Shakespearean plays online and three in person). It was fascinating to see so many different versions of the same plays (e.g., five *Midsummer Night’s Dream*, four *Macbeth*, four *Hamlet*) and trace directorial intentions and theater politics over a decade of shows. It was definitely a dream season as I would never have had the opportunity to see those shows otherwise and some non-Shakespeare (like *Cats* with the original London cast and *Joseph and the Technicolor Dream Coat* with Donny Osmond). I was also able to write and publish a book review before the Shakespeare Institute’s library closed in March and to volunteer once a week explaining and showing off Shakespeare’s Schoolhouse and Guildhall. (So worth your time if you ever visit Stratford-upon-Avon! Such an amazing place.)

Unfortunately, the theater review I was contracted to publish was lost when the play was canceled due to the lockdown. So close. I also regret the lost opportunities to check off my bucket list item of seeing Judi Dench live, to attend four special 90th birthday lectures with the greatest living Shakespearean scholar, Sir Dr. Stanley Wells, plus attend all of the usual Shakespeare Birthday celebrations I’ve dreamed of attending all my adult life. I did have tickets... sigh!

# Leadership Salkehatchie: Emerging leaders benefit from regional leadership program

Reprinted from *The Augusta Chronicle*, Augusta, Ga.

At a time when rural communities are facing huge challenges, a dynamic program is helping shape the future of the Salkehatchie region.

**Leadership Salkehatchie**, a partnership between USC Salkehatchie's Leadership Institute and Southern Carolina Alliance (SCA), helps identify individuals with leadership potential from the seven-county region (Allendale, Bamberg, Barnwell, Beaufort, Colleton, Hampton and Jasper counties) and raises them to a new level of awareness and community involvement. The intensive leadership program provides insight into issues that affect economic development including workforce training, infrastructure, health care, education and quality of life.

"It's imperative that we identify the emerging leaders and talent in our region so that they will have a comprehensive understanding of our region's current and future assets and challenges," said SCA's Vice President Kay Maxwell. "We are pleased that many of our past leadership participants are now today's leaders in industry, business, non-profits, and local and county government. They are making decisions every day that will create stronger communities for our future. Southern Carolina Alliance is proud to be a part of that."

SCA believes leadership development is so critical to the region's future that they are providing full scholarships for every participant selected in this highly competitive program.

Leadership Salkehatchie began over 20 years ago as a small group of community members who were concerned about the challenges facing the Salkehatchie region, one of the most impoverished areas of our state, sought change. Anne Rice, USC Salkehatchie Leadership Institute's former executive director, was instrumental in getting the program off the ground. Her goal was to help people from the region become better-informed citizens and provide a platform for diverse groups of citizens to work together to improve the livability of their communities.

Today, the program not only focuses on local impact but also on the ability to effect change on the state and national levels. Emerging

leaders benefit from regional leadership program

Visits with state representatives, as well as a day trip to Washington, D.C., to meet with regional legislative delegations, are now included to provide the opportunity for participants to share their community concerns.

Past participants cite the skills and experiences that they have gained from Leadership Salkehatchie as a reason for their increased community involvement.

2014 Salkehatchie Leadership participant Kristin Huber, who lives in Williston, said the one-year investment in the program has paid substantial dividends in her current role as public relations specialist with Government

because of its unique attributes, their passions for the communities drives their desires to improve the quality of life for the citizens. Barnwell County Councilman Daniel Alexander is one such participant.

"Barnwell County is a place that means so much to my family and me. My wife and I graduated from Barnwell High School and decided to move back to raise our family here. I am the type of person who wants to get involved in the community where I live. The opportunity to shape the way our county will look in the future is an important goal that I take very seriously," Alexander said.

Shelby Broomfield, program director for Dreams Imagination and Gift Development Program, echoes that sentiment.

"Barnwell will always be home for me. While growing up and going to college, I was able to meet so many people from so many different places. Meeting people from different places and from more metropolitan areas, always made me question moving out of state and to other places. As I grew, learned more, and attained more education, I always thought of what I could do with my experience and talent back at home. Why not give my talent and experience back to a town that has helped mold me into the person I am today? What changes could I make? How can I make a difference? For those reasons, I wanted to use my talent and experience to serve my hometown," she said.

Broomfield now inspires students in the Salkehatchie region by providing STEM opportunities and helping students build confidence in these skills.

"Working with students to help prepare them for future jobs and positions in the STEM fields is very important. The STEM career field is a lucrative career choice in which there are many career options in the field but a gap in filling those jobs because of the struggle to find skilled employees. Our hope is that when our students make their future career plans and go off to college with students from bigger areas with more resources than our area, that they feel confident and competent in these skills. Our hope is that when our students graduate from college in a STEM field, they

**Leadership Salkehatchie, a partnership between USC Salkehatchie's Leadership Institute and Southern Carolina Alliance, helps identify individuals with leadership potential from the seven-county region and raises them to a new level of awareness and community involvement.**

**The intensive leadership program provides insight into issues that affect economic development including workforce training, infrastructure, health care, education and quality of life.**

and Community Relations at Savannah River Nuclear Solutions

"Through this program, I created relationships with business leaders from across the seven-county reach of the SCA, some of which I still rely heavily on today. This program poured skills and opportunities into my career that were impactful but also unique to the characteristics of our exceptional region," Huber said.

Many of the Leadership Salkehatchie participants have returned to the rural Lowcountry after leaving to fulfill educational or career goals. Drawn back to the region

can identify a STEM industry in our region and make the choice to come and give back to our region,” Broomfield said.

Others have been inspired by the program’s discussions. During a meeting held at the Darla Moore School of Business on the UofSC campus in Columbia, the Class of 2020 participated in sessions led by UofSC President Bob Caslen, State Superintendent of Education Molly Spearman and Maceo Nance, director of Targeted Rural Strategy and Special Projects for the S.C. Department of Commerce. During these sessions, participant Amye Stivender gained valuable insight that has helped her react to the recent challenges she has faced in her job as lieutenant of support services and public information officer for the City of Walterboro.

“Leaders emerge when difficult times arise. They find new and innovative ways to overcome challenges and rise to find

solutions to problems that are plaguing their communities. Strong community leaders will lead from the front. This is something that President Caslen spoke with my leadership class about during one of our sessions. It is something that I have found to be true during times of crisis. It is important to have local officials working together with the community to have the most beneficial outcomes,” Stivender said.

Leadership Salkehatchie is currently seeking applications for the Class of 2021. Participants must be nominated by their peers and go through an application process. Previous Salkehatchie classes have included business leaders, educators, community leaders, law enforcement and many others from across the region.

The year-long program includes monthly seminars with experts, tours of the Salkehatchie region and opportunities for participants to

meet with government leaders to exchange information and concerns. Leadership Salkehatchie often accesses the university’s resources to enhance leadership development skills. Kirk Randazzo, a UofSC professor of political science and leadership, is a frequent presenter. His “Leadership in 3-D” presentation challenges participants to look at their current leadership styles and examine their roles as community leaders.

“Leadership Salkehatchie is an excellent program that will allow you to get to know the community in a way that most people will never experience. The program offers insights into every industry, level of government, and historical aspects of the region, providing perspectives from grass root development to state and federal policies. Leadership Salkehatchie inspires you to serve,” said **Tony Jackson**, director of enrollment management at USC Salkehatchie.

## USC Salkehatchie’s Rural Nursing Initiative broadens program

USC Salkehatchie’s Bachelor of Science in Nursing program in Walterboro will now partner with USC Beaufort instead of UofSC (Columbia) to deliver high quality nursing education. Since 2006, the UofSC College of Nursing partnership program has supplied these rural communities with more than 100 highly qualified RNs with bachelor’s degrees in nursing; the majority of graduates continue to serve in and around the Salkehatchie region.

Administrators at the three campuses worked together to gain approval from appropriate governing bodies, helping to ensure a smooth transition and prevent gaps in education among the students. “In an effort to enhance our ability to reduce the shortage of BSN-level RNs in the rural Salkehatchie region, we hope to increase the number of students accepted into the program at some point in the future,” said **April Cone**, DNP, MSN, RN and nursing academic program manager for UofSC College of Nursing and USC Salkehatchie.

“Re-aligning with a program closer to these rural communities allows for face-to-face instruction versus distance instruction by faculty dedicated to the Salkehatchie students, a significant increase in use of the high-tech clinical simulation lab on USC Salkehatchie’s Walterboro campus, and an increase in local



healthcare agency affiliations to enhance clinical education,” said Cone.

Because of funding from private foundations, USC Salkehatchie in Walterboro is able to offer high-fidelity simulation training. The lab provides nursing students and area healthcare providers with a centrally located, state-of-the-art, dynamic simulation lab training facility, eliminating travel for simulation activities.

“The mission of the [USC Salkehatchie Rural](#)

[Nursing Initiative](#) remains the same — to grow our own nurses in hope they will remain in the Salkehatchie region to work and improve the overall health of those within our local communities,” she said.

For five consecutive years, 100 percent of the program’s graduates have passed the NCLEX-RN (state board exam for registered nurses) on their first attempt, a remarkable accomplishment USC Salkehatchie administration hopes to see continue.

# Palmetto College Campuses create new outlets to present meaningful student and faculty research

Opportunities are ripe for research among faculty and students across the Palmetto College Campuses.

USC Lancaster has introduced the [USCL Research Club](#), a year-long series of virtual conference “episodes” that may be viewed online at your leisure. Launched Nov. 2, the research club also invites the participation of students, faculty, and staff across all Palmetto College Campuses. The conference can be accessed online via [YouTube](#), [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), and the [conference website](#).

**Dr. Elizabeth Easely** and **Dr. Sarah Hunt**



**Elizabeth Easely**

**Sellhorst** launched the conference and serve as advisors to the research club.

There have even been opportunities for collaboration among campuses in this endeavor. During the latter part of November 2020, a week of the streaming research presentations were led and conducted by students and faculty at USC Union.

USC Salkehatchie is home to the [Salkehatchie Scholarly Research Forum](#) (SSRF), a public outreach series that shares university research with its community.



**Sarah Hunt Sellhorst**

SSRF gives faculty and students an opportunity to share their research beyond academic conferences and journals. Since its March 2019 inception, the Forum has sponsored 14 events, including eleven presentations, one roundtable discussion, and two student research exhibitions on topics spanning psychology, mathematics, history, biology and chemistry. Livestreamed events and recordings may be found on the [SSRF Facebook page](#). **Dr. Justin Mogilski** established and coordinates the forum.



**Justin Mogilski**

## Chancellor's Corner, [continued from page 1](#)

you watch the recording of the Town Hall and Holiday Coffee event!

Special thanks to the Palmetto College Campus Deans and **Associate Provost John Catalano** for presenting with me at the Town Hall, as well as to **Mr. Bob Dyer** and **Ms. Leah Kososki** for assisting with the event. Also, many thanks to Ms. Kososki and our Palmetto College Student Assistants, **Gracie Gipson**, **Katie Hall**, and **Phillip Starnes**, for their extraordinary “elf” efforts in wrapping the gifts, and to **Mr. Chris DeWolf**, **Mr. Darris Hassell**, **Interim Dean Randy Lowell** and **Dr. Bryan Love** for driving the sleighs full of gifts to the Sumter, Lancaster, Union and Salkehatchie campuses, respectively!

One of the key items shared in the Town Hall was the results of the surveys completed by our Palmetto College faculty, staff and students regarding our response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The total responses received were 540, with 344 from students, 89 from faculty and instructional staff, and 87 from non-instructional staff. Many thanks to all of you who responded! Your efforts will assist us in making improvements for the upcoming spring semester and in the future. Overall, the responses were overwhelmingly positive and many cited good communication and campus support. All three groups were generally satisfied with mask usage, social distancing, and cleaning. Finally, most

respondents agreed that courses seemed more challenging and that students had a harder time attending and completing assignments this year. The results have been shared with the Leadership Teams at all the campuses, and a collective Action Plan has been developed to address improvements for the spring semester.

Some of the key items in the Action Plan include – first and foremost – continuing to emphasize the safety, health and well-being of faculty, staff, and students; continuing the weekly meetings of the Palmetto College Emergency Management Team and continuing to communicate, communicate and communicate more; and investigating proposed solutions to test proctoring issues with faculty input. The summary of responses, along with the actual survey results and the full Action Plan can be found [here](#). Please take time to review the survey results and the Action Plan at your convenience. Again, we are very grateful for the input as we continue to strive to keep our faculty, staff, and students as safe as possible in this new COVID-19 environment. Special thanks to Associate Provost Catalano, Mr. Dyer, **Ms. Victoria Hollins** and **Dean Mike Sonntag** for their leadership in the survey efforts.

Finally, in closing, we have been very fortunate to hear some amazing student stories from recent Palmetto College alumni, and I would like to pass them along to you as a thank

you for your tremendous impact on the lives of the amazing students we serve.

In a presentation to the University Board of Trustees earlier this year, we shared a [short film](#) featuring the inspiring personal narratives of **Yanet Alvarez**, a product of USC Sumter and USC Aiken; **Clark Dean**, a product of USC Union's Laurens site and UofSC Columbia; **Adam Everett**, a product of UofSC Columbia and Palmetto College Columbia; and **Automne Hasenberg**, a product of the USC Sumter Shaw Air Force Base Program, UofSC Columbia and Palmetto College Columbia.

In addition to the short film presented to the Board, the stories of these alumni are also featured in the latest Palmetto College Online commercial campaign. You can see the short film featuring these bright alumni [here](#), and the new commercial campaign may be viewed [here](#).

The stories of these extraordinary students certainly remind us of, “Why we do... what we do... everyday!” Thank you again for your many contributions to Palmetto College and the students we serve!!! As we end the Fall Semester and this unprecedented year, please know how very much your many efforts are appreciated! You are truly transforming lives across South Carolina every day!

Have a much-deserved, restful break and a wonderful holiday season!!!

## Palmetto College Faculty and Staff among UofSC System Academic Leadership Fellows



Jessica All

In November 2020, USC Salkehatchie's Walterboro campus served as host to the 2020 cohort of the **University of South Carolina System Academic Leadership Fellow Program.**

The Leadership Fellow Program provides a select group of UofSC System faculty and staff with the opportunity to explore critical issues in higher education, to network with peers, and learn from leaders throughout the UofSC System and across the nation. From the Walterboro session, Palmetto College Chancellor Susan Elkins made a presentation to the cohort to educate them about USC Palmetto College in its totality.



Kenneth Cole

Fellows representing Palmetto College and the Palmetto College Campuses this year include USC Lancaster Director of Financial Aid **Kenneth Cole**, USC Salkehatchie Director of Finance **Jessica All**, USC Sumter Professor of English **Ray McManus**, USC Union Professor of Political Science **Christine Sixta Rinehart** and Palmetto College Director of Financial Aid **Bridget Blackwell.**



Ray McManus



Christine Sixta Rinehart

## Palmetto College awarded \$400K+ grant to upgrade distance learning classrooms on all campuses

Palmetto College is the recipient of a \$431,278 **Rural Utilities Services Distance Learning and Telemedicine Loan and Grant Program Grant.**

This award will be used to upgrade distance learning classrooms in Palmetto College Columbia and across all four Palmetto College Campuses, including: Palmetto College Columbia – Hampton 404U, USC Salkehatchie-Walterboro – 217, USC Salkehatchie-Allendale – LRB 101 and the USC Lancaster – Medford 212. These classrooms will receive updated projectors, televisions, video conferencing equipment and new room microphones.

“These improvements will improve the overall quality of courses while increasing the video quality from standard definition to high definition,” said Palmetto College IT Director **Bob Dyer.**

New Eagle Eye Director cameras will be installed to allow for better interaction with students and instructors.

“Eagle Eye Director cameras can identify who is talking and zoom in directly to the person that is speaking,” added Dyer.

USC Union and USC Salkehatchie will receive mobile video conferencing carts. The Palmetto College Columbia – Hampton 404U classroom is expected to be upgraded in early January 2021 with the remainder of the rooms to be upgraded in the Summer 2021 due to the ongoing pandemic, unless an appropriate opportunity exists to upgrade the classrooms during the Spring 2021 semester.

## USC Salkehatchie awarded \$650K+ Rural Communities Grant

USC Salkehatchie received \$654,000 in a \$5 Million **Workforce Opportunities in Rural Communities Grant (WORC II)** from the United States Department of Energy and National Nuclear Security Administration in partnership with USC Aiken, Aiken Technical College, Augusta Technical College, Augusta University and Claflin University.

Each partner institution will focus on specific areas of their expertise to provide training and education relevant to NNSA workforce needs. WORC II funding covers costs associated with student recruitment, training equipment, student scholarships, supplies and instructor salary as approved by NNSA in agreements made with each partner.

USC Salkehatchie will use WORC II grant funds to improve K-12 STEM education in the rural region it supports to develop a talent pipeline. Additionally, the University will use WORC II funding to expand student financial aid and support for established STEM fields of study at its two rural campuses. These primary goals are particularly related to the University's mission, which involves serving to provide the first two years of study for rural students within the University of South Carolina System. And, some of those students may transition into the 2+2 Industrial Process Engineering program established through WORC I in coordination with USC Aiken.

**We're social. Follow us @PalmettoCollege on Twitter and Facebook.**

# USC Salkehatchie's Miller provides a haven for animals in Colleton, Allendale counties

As a history professor at USC Salkehatchie, **Dr. Sarah Miller** is committed to the success of her students and advancing the mission of the campus communities and Palmetto College as a whole.

Her teaching has been honored time and again, including Miller being named as a four-time USC Salkehatchie Teacher of the Year. She has also been honored by Palmetto College as a whole, as the inaugural winner of two of the three Palmetto College Campus Excellence Awards. Miller is the 2009 recipient of the John J. Duffy Excellence in Teaching Award and the 2016 recipient of the Chris P. Plyler Excellence in Service Award.

In addition to teaching history, Miller serves as the historian for the Colleton County Historical and Preservation Society. She also served as the historic consultant and preservation expert on the 2018 documentary film, "The Burnt Church: An Exploration of Pon Pon Chapel of Ease." The film discusses the mid-18th Century ruins of an Anglican Church located in Colleton County, including its history, preservation and the community support of the structure. She has served as an executive officer of the South Carolina Historical Association as well.

She is the 2019 recipient of the Walterboro-Colleton County Chamber of Commerce Humanitarian Award. And, Miller is heavily involved with the animal care and advocacy work of the Friends of Colleton County Animal Shelter.

The nonprofit organization supports the Colleton County Animal Shelter and the animals of Colleton County. Miller served as president for three years and she has served as the vice president of public relations for the last four years.

In the latter capacity, Miller has been in charge of fundraisers and public relations initiatives for the organization, including two annual fundraising initiatives.

"Paws at the Plantation" is an event comprised of a barbecue, silent auction, live auction, raffle and live music at a local plantation that usually raises between \$10,000 to \$12,000 for the work of the animal shelter.

The other annual event, "Walk and Wag," is a family-friendly, dog-friendly community event serving lunch with vendors and an optional guide-led walk through the Walterboro Wildlife Sanctuary.

The organization also hosts an annual dog show at the Colleton County Rice Festival, and has benefited the Howl-O-Ween Chili Cookoff.

Friends of Colleton County Animal Shelter supports the animal shelter by supplementing funding for spays/neuters, vaccines and microchips. The nonprofit offers low-cost spay and neuter initiatives for the community, and present a responsible pet ownership course for all public school fourth graders in Colleton County.

Miller's advocacy work with the animal shelter doesn't end with coordinating fundraisers.

"I also foster dogs and puppies," she said. "I have fostered 201 dogs and puppies since 2015."

Most of the dogs and puppies have been from the Colleton County Animal Shelter, but she has also fostered for the Allendale County Animal Shelter.

Miller has fostered litters of four, five and six puppies at once.

"The most puppies I have ever fostered at one time was ten," she said. "They were under a house in Allendale County and needed a

place to stay for two weeks over Thanksgiving – so they stayed with me."

Miller also likes to give her fosters fun names. On July 1, she named the four puppies in her care after the signers of the Declaration of Independence – John Hancock, Benjamin Franklin, Arthur Middleton and Elbridge Gerry.

"I've also named them for presidents, first ladies and explorers," said Miller. "Sometimes I name them after television shows, like the six siblings that I named Monica, Rachel, Phoebe, Joey, Chandler and Ross from [the TV sitcom] *Friends*."

In addition to her work with the Friends of Colleton County Animal Shelter in Walterboro, Miller volunteers with Partners for Pets of Allendale County, which supports the Allendale County Animal Shelter.

"Salkehatchie has campuses in both Walterboro and Allendale," she said. "I feel strongly connected to both places and love that I can help the animals in both places."



**"Anne Bonny" and "Grace O'Malley" are two of the 201 dogs that USC Salkehatchie Professor Sarah Miller has fostered since 2015. A volunteer with animal shelters in Colleton County and Allendale County, the historian often gives the puppies fun names inspired by historical figures and fictional characters in popular culture.**

## Palmetto College COVID-19 Online Dashboard

COVID-19 infection rates remain low on our Palmetto College campuses. Thank you for your continued use of face coverings and social distancing. Your efforts to keep yourselves, your students, your colleagues and your communities safe are greatly appreciated. For weekly COVID-19 testing data for our Palmetto College campuses, please continue to consult the [online dashboard](#) on the Palmetto College website.

# New slate of Palmetto College commercials premiere

The latest batch of Palmetto College commercials premiered in August 2020. Set to be filmed and to debut in the Spring semester, filming was initially delayed in response to the current pandemic. The commercials feature four Palmetto College graduates spanning the regional Palmetto College Campuses – USC Lancaster, USC Salkehatchie, USC Sumter and USC Union – and the Palmetto College Online Partners – USC Aiken, USC Beaufort, UofSC (Columbia) and USC Upstate. Some featured subjects also represent the two online bachelor's degrees offered by Palmetto College Columbia, an academic division of Palmetto College that is based on the Columbia Campus and on-post at Fort Jackson.

Alumni featured in the new batch of commercials include [Yanet Alvarez](#) (USC Sumter/USC Aiken), [Clark Dean](#) (USC Union-Laurens/UofSC), [Adam Everett](#) (UofSC) and [Automne Hasenberg](#) (Shaw Air Force Base/UofSC).

This batch of commercials is a continuation of the third Palmetto College Online commercial campaign that debuted in spring 2019, which was the first to feature actual alumni rather than actors.

The four 30-second commercials have aired on broadcast and cable television in metropolitan areas in select regions across South Carolina. The complementary four 15-second commercials are shown as digital pre-roll video online, as well as on Connected TV and on streaming devices.

The first Palmetto College Online commercial campaign, launched in late 2014 and early 2015, featured six commercials. This 2014 campaign

earned a (Silver) Telly Award, the highest level of achievement given for commercial work internationally. The combined original television and radio broadcast campaign earned a (Gold) Excellence in Marketing Award from UPCEA, the University Professional, Continuing and Online Education Association.

The second commercial campaign, launched in mid-2017, featured four commercials. That campaign earned American Advertising Awards (ADDYs) for two individual commercials in the campaign.

The first half of the current commercial campaign debuted in late April 2019 and featured the first group of Palmetto College alumni sharing their experiences; previous commercial campaigns featured actors. A compilation of the 2019 commercials appeared as a standalone five-minute video focused on five Palmetto College alumni representing the first five years of Palmetto College Online. Alumni featured in the Palmetto College Online five-

year anniversary video include [Ryan West](#) (UofSC), [Nicole Ramsey](#) (UofSC); [Dirk Bron Jr.](#) (USC Salkehatchie/USC Union/USC Upstate), [Chan Samreth](#) (USC Upstate) and [Andrew Verma](#) (USC Aiken).

The current second half of the commercial campaign focuses on four Palmetto College alumni, bring the full count of commercials in this campaign to nine 30-second commercials and nine 15-second commercials. All previous commercial campaigns – [2014-15](#), [2017](#) and [2019](#) – are available to view online, as well as the [new 2020 portion of the campaign](#).



The new Palmetto College Online commercials feature alumni (clockwise from top left) Yanet Alvarez, Clark Dean, Automne Hasenberg and Adam Everett. Click on the individual images to see and hear their personal Palmetto College stories. You can also view a [short film](#) featuring all four Palmetto College graduates.

## Temporary Remote Work Authorization

The opportunity for temporary remote work has been extended for employees who are high-risk and vulnerable. If arrangements have been made with their supervisors, these employees may be permitted to continue working remotely through May 15, 2021, once they have completed a [Temporary Remote Work Authorization form](#). Please refer to the [Palmetto College Reopen and Risk Mitigation Plan](#), and the [UofSC coronavirus website](#) for up-to-date information on our ongoing institutional and system responses to the COVID-19 pandemic.

This year proved to be one of loss for many families. This holds especially true for the Palmetto College family. Since the “new” normal of our daily lives changed, several within the Palmetto College community died. Whether it be in military service, from the natural progression of age, to the tragic effects of the current COVID-19 pandemic we wanted to take a moment to remember and honor those lost this year.

# In Memoriam



**First Lieutenant Trevarius Ravon Bowman**, 25, of Spartanburg, S.C. passed on May 19, 2020, at Bagram Air Base in Afghanistan. Tre Bowman served as a Palmetto College webmaster and

admissions IT specialist in central Palmetto College Administration from early 2018 until his deployment at the beginning of 2019; he was set to return to his position within Palmetto College in late 2020. He was assigned to B Company, 198th Signal Battalion, 261st Signal Brigade, located in Newberry, S.C. He served in the South Carolina National Guard for five years, starting off as an enlisted soldier before receiving his commission at USC Upstate, where he also earned his bachelor's degree.



**Mr. Maurice Nigel Simmons**, 41, of Clinton, S.C., passed June 26, 2020. Prior to his move upstate, Coach Simmons was an assistant basketball coach at USC Salkehatchie, served on the coaching staff

at Colleton County High School for a number of sports and led the Colleton Prep Basketball Program to its most successful season in recent history during the 2018-19 season.



**Mrs. Mary Jo Rogers**, 86, passed on Oct. 3, 2020, in Union, S.C. Rogers spent her career as an executive administrative assistant, serving with the U.S. Bureau of Naval Personnel, Travelers Insurance,

Royal Typewriter, and McDonnell Douglas. After returning to her native Union, S.C., she spent much of her career at USC Union where she retired in 2008. In recent years, she often continued to visit the campus, but had been unable to do so in recent months due to the ongoing pandemic.



**Mr. Paris Javon Dubois**, 40, of Ruffin, S.C., passed in early June 2020. Dubois was the Transfer and Retention Specialist with the Opportunity Scholars Program at USC Salkehatchie. He was a prime example of

the life-altering possibilities of a USC Palmetto College education, graduating with an associate degree from Salkehatchie and later completing a bachelor's degree through Palmetto College Online. Dubois stayed on with Salkehatchie as a staff member to work with students who held aspirations similar to his own and who sought to advance their own post-secondary education.



**Dr. Aaron J. Ard**, 57, passed on June 30, 2020. Ard had just received tenure and promotion to Associate Professor of Management at USC Salkehatchie by the University Board of Trustees at

its June 2020 meeting. He had also served the campus for several years as Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. In addition to being an outstanding educator, Ard's route to higher education represented the indirect path taken by many Palmetto College students and the opportunities for great successes that might become available to them. A high school dropout, he served in the Navy and as a law enforcement officer before pursuing a college degree. He continued on to earn a Ph.D. in Statistics from Cornell University, before beginning a career in academia.



**Mrs. Elaine Funk Belangia**, 78, passed Oct. 4, 2020, in Simpsonville, S.C. A teacher at heart, she shared her passion for learning with S.C. school students for more than 30 years. Belangia could do

it all – she could teach a first-grader how to read, inspire a ninth-grader to appreciate a Shakespearean monologue, or encourage a church youth group broken down beside the road on a mission trip. Even after “retiring,” she continued to teach part-time as an adjunct English instructor at USC Salkehatchie.



# 2019-20 NJCAA ALL-ACADEMIC TEAMS

## All-Academic First Team 4.00 GPA

**Austin Baal**, Freshman  
USC Union – Baseball

**Noah Bearden**, Sophomore  
USC Salkehatchie – Baseball

**Keeley Hulse**, Freshman  
USC Sumter – Softball

**Grace Lee**, Freshman  
USC Union – Softball

**Shornden McCloud**, Sophomore  
USC Sumter – Men's Soccer

**Joshua Nelson**, Sophomore  
USC Union – Baseball

## All-Academic Second Team 3.80-3.99 GPA

**Samuel Anders**, Sophomore  
USC Union – Men's Soccer

**Danielle Bradley**, Sophomore  
USC Union – Softball

**Tania Contreras**, Sophomore  
USC Union – Men's Soccer

**Caitlyn Crawford**, Freshman  
USC Union – Softball

**Triston Fowler**, Sophomore  
USC Union – Baseball

**Brandon Griffin**, Freshman  
USC Sumter – Men's Golf

**Alexandra Hardee**, Sophomore  
USC Salkehatchie – Softball

**Madeline Hines**, Freshman  
USC Sumter – Women's Tennis

**Carlton Kinlaw**, Freshman  
USC Sumter – Men's Golf

**Wesley Livingston**, Freshman  
USC Union – Baseball

**Jordan Shuping**, Freshman  
USC Sumter – Women's Tennis

**Kailee Stepp**, Freshman  
USC Salkehatchie – Softball

## All-Academic Third Team 3.60-3.79 GPA

**Jacob Anderson**, Freshman  
USC Salkehatchie – Baseball

**Alexandria Basley**, Sophomore  
USC Sumter – Women's Tennis

**Courtney Bice**, Sophomore  
USC Salkehatchie – Softball

**Hayden Carroll**, Freshman  
USC Sumter – Baseball

**Benjamin Coffey**, Freshman  
USC Union – Men's Soccer

**Gabriel DeDavid**, Sophomore  
USC Salkehatchie – Baseball

**Sebastian Field**, Freshman  
USC Salkehatchie – Baseball

**Laura Henderson**, Freshman  
USC Salkehatchie – Softball

**Bryanna Honeycutt**, Sophomore  
USC Salkehatchie – Volleyball (Court)

**Chandler Koerner**, Sophomore  
USC Union – Baseball

**Heimanarii Lai San**, Freshman  
USC Sumter – Men's Tennis

**Austin Medlock**, Sophomore  
USC Sumter – Baseball

**Lee Metts**, Sophomore  
USC Sumter – Baseball

**Brittani Mosher**, Sophomore  
USC Salkehatchie – Women's Soccer

**Alexis Odum**, Sophomore  
USC Union – Softball

**Jorjay Paladines**, Sophomore  
USC Sumter – Men's Tennis

**Chase Rikard**, Freshman  
USC Salkehatchie – Baseball

**Lucas Rodrigues**, Sophomore  
USC Sumter – Men's Tennis

**Pedro Santana**, Freshman  
USC Salkehatchie – Men's Soccer

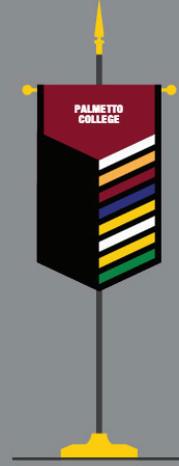
**Alex Tapia**, Sophomore  
USC Salkehatchie – Baseball

**Veronica Vargas**, Freshman  
USC Salkehatchie – Volleyball (Court)



# Happy Holidays

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA**  
Palmetto College



## **REGIONAL PALMETTO COLLEGE CAMPUSES**

Lancaster | Salkehatchie | Sumter | Union  
Palmetto College Columbia

## **PALMETTO COLLEGE ONLINE PARTNERS**

Aiken | Beaufort | Columbia | Upstate

Visit our website to read more about students and graduates like Yanet, Clark, Adam and Automne who have benefitted from Palmetto College's accessible, affordable and flexible degrees to meet the higher education needs of South Carolinians.

[palmettocollege.sc.edu](http://palmettocollege.sc.edu)

2020

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