

Chancellor's Corner



Dr. Susan A. Elkins, Chancellor
USC Palmetto College

As we prepare to enter 2022 and the beginning of the ten-year celebration of the formation of the University of South Carolina Palmetto College, let me begin by thanking each of you again this semester for your service in support of our mission to our students and communities.

In the Nov. 12 Palmetto College Campuses Faculty Senate meeting, I shared news with the assembled faculty that bears sharing with both faculty and staff regarding the 2020 Faculty Senate Welfare Survey Report that was received from the Senate Welfare Committee on Aug. 24, 2021, and the items being taken to address the recommendations from the report. Of note: (1) Palmetto College leadership has committed another \$100,000 toward funding the recommendation of the 2018-2019 Salary Study for both faculty and staff salaries during this fiscal year. (2) Active shooter training has been scheduled for each of the

Chancellor's Corner,
[continued page 11](#)



USC Salkehatchie BSN grads earn 100% NCLEX first-time pass rate for sixth straight year

For the sixth straight year, 100% of graduates from the USC Salkehatchie-based Bachelor of Science in Nursing program passed the NCLEX on their first attempt, well above the national first-time pass rate of 88.09%. The NCLEX exam is a standardized test used to determine state licensure.

"Completing a rigorous

nursing program is no easy task, yet these students successfully did so during a historical pandemic. They are resilient, dedicated, and persistent, and I have no doubt they will provide exceptional nursing care in and around the Salkehatchie region," said April Cone, nursing academic program manager. "Growing our own

nurses is our mission, and I am humbled and grateful to have the opportunity to be involved in helping to meet that mission. To say I am proud of these students is an understatement."

USC Salkehatchie, in partnership with USC Beaufort, provides up to 16 students per year the

[Salk BSN, continued page 12](#)

All four Palmetto College Campuses top Niche rankings of South Carolina community colleges

The University of South Carolina's four regional Palmetto College campuses lead the pack among the state's community colleges in the 2022 Niche Best College rankings.

In the list of [2022 Best Community Colleges in South Carolina](#), Niche ranked all four regional Palmetto College campuses: No. 1 USC Lancaster, No. 2 USC Sumter, No. 4 USC Union and No. 6 USC Salkehatchie.

"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 nearly 5,000 students within the Allendale,

[Niche rankings, continued page 12](#)

Palmetto College faculty researchers awarded 2021 summer RISE grants

The Research Initiative for Summer Engagement (RISE) Grant was initiated in 2012 to

support summer research for faculty members at University of South Carolina System campuses. This program employs a competitive application process to provide money for summer salary, research supplies, travel related to research and undergraduate student support to bolster scholarship throughout the UofSC System. Along with helping faculty develop research programs, RISE also aims to equip regional and senior campuses to better serve their local communities as well as to support the larger university mission.

Ten Palmetto College faculty have been awarded RISE grants to support their summer research this year, including:

Li Cai

Professor of Chemistry
USC Lancaster

New Synthesis of a Monophosphoryl Lipid A (MPLA) Derivative

Sher Chhetri

Assistant Professor of Mathematics
USC Sumter

Statistical Inference for Stochastic Climate Models with Levy Jumps

David Hatch

Associate Professor of English
USC Salkehatchie

Samuel Beckett's Dialogues: Three Dialogues/Three Exhibitions, Philosophy, and Theatre

Justin Mogilski

Assistant Professor of Psychology
USC Salkehatchie

Testing the longitudinal validity and reliability of the Multi-partner Relationship

Maintenance Scale (MRMS)

Lokendra Paudel

Assistant Professor of Mathematics
USC Salkehatchie

Valuation Overings of Polynomial Rings and Group of Divisibility

David Roberts

Associate Professor of Philosophy
USC Lancaster

Individuation Gone Awry: The Cynical Therapeutic

Nahid Swails

Assistant Professor of Physics
USC Lancaster

Understanding and controlling the formation of surface defects in additive manufactured structures

Lukasz Szatkowski

Assistant Professor of Chemistry
USC Sumter

Influence of polyethylene glycol (PEG) on the enzyme reactions with phenol derivatives catalyzed by horseradish peroxidase (HRP). Substage I: Docking of PEG to the HRP and influence of PEG on the structure and dynamic of HRP

Brittany Taylor-Driggers

Assistant Professor of Art
USC Lancaster

Native American Studies Contemporary Artist-In-Residence: An Opportunity for Non-Traditional Native American Artists

Marquita Watkins

Assistant Professor of Chemistry
USC Salkehatchie
Investigation of Pristine and Functionalized Carbon Nanotubes (CNTs) Adsorption on Select Persistent Organic Pollutants



Please submit all items for the Spring 2021 issue no later than Tuesday, April 5, 2022.

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](#)

USC Salkehatchie
[Stephanie Gruber](#)

USC Sumter
[Alethia Hummel](#)

USC Union
[Annie Smith](#)

Palmetto College Columbia
[Jean Carrano](#)

Palmetto College Online
[Jason Darby](#)

Archived editions of the **USC Palmetto College Connections** from the Fall 2015 edition onward may be found [online](#) on the Palmetto College website.

Lowe's *The Slow Undoing* reconsiders role of federal district courts in South Carolina civil rights movement

New treatise is an award finalist for best book on S.C. history

Steve Lowe, professor of history at USC Union and director of the liberal studies and organizational leadership programs within Palmetto College Columbia, recently authored a book – [*The Slow Undoing: The Federal Courts and the Long*](#)

[*Struggle for Civil Rights in South Carolina*](#) –

which was published by the University of South Carolina Press in June 2021.



Steve Lowe

The book is a finalist for the [*George C. Rogers Jr. Award*](#), which is presented annually by the South Carolina Historical Society to the author of the best book of South Carolina history published during the previous year.

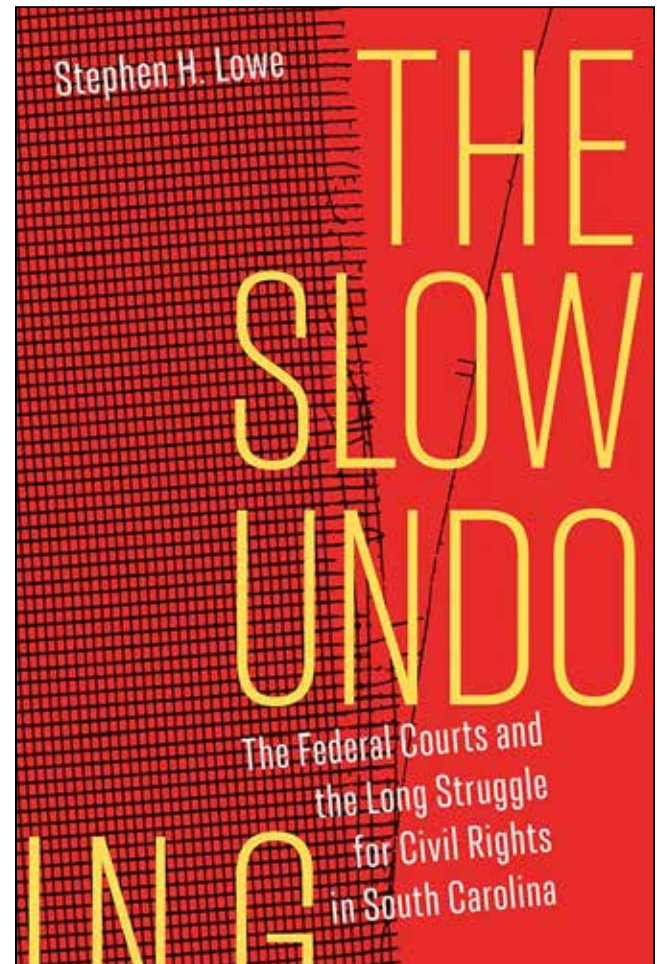
As the first comprehensive study of one state's federal district courts during the long civil rights movement, *The Slow Undoing* argues for a reconsideration of the role of the federal courts in the civil rights movement. It places the courts as a central battleground at the intersections of struggles over race, law and civil rights. During the long civil rights movement, Black and white South Carolinians used the courts as a venue to contest the meanings of the constitution, justice, equality and citizenship.

African American plaintiffs and lawyers from South Carolina, with the support of Thurgood Marshall and other lawyers from the NAACP

Legal Defense and Education Fund, brought and argued civil rights lawsuits in South Carolina's federal courts attempting to secure the vote, raise teacher salaries, and to equalize and then desegregate schools, parks, and public life. In response, white citizens, state politicians and local officials hired their own lawyers, who countered these arguments by crafting new legal theories in an attempt to defend state practices and thwart African American aspirations of equality and to preserve white supremacy.

The Slow Undoing examines the role of federal courts in the civil rights movement by demonstrating that both before and after *Brown v. Board of Education*, the federal district courts were centrally important to achieving and solidifying civil rights gains. It relies on the entire legal record of actions in the federal district courts of South Carolina from 1940 to 1970 to make the case. The book argues that rather than relying on litigation during the pre-*Brown* era and direct action in the post-*Brown* era, African Americans instead used courts and direct action in tandem to bring down legal segregation throughout the long civil rights era. But the process was far from linear and the courts were not always a progressive force. The battles were long, the victories won were often imperfect, and many of the fights remain.

Lowe recently appeared on the [SC Lede podcast](#) and [Walter Edgar's Journal](#) on SCETV Radio to discuss the book.



Reviews

"Stephen Lowe shows how citizen activists and their lawyers used direct action and litigation to undermine South Carolina's version of segregation through a careful and detailed examination of what actually happened in the federal courts." — Mark Tushnet, William Nelson Cromwell professor of law emeritus, Harvard Law School

"This is a book of great import, combining first-rate narrative and incisive analysis. Lowe provides the essential details that create the larger discourse of the national fight against Jim Crow. There is elegance and power in this critical story." — Orville Vernon Burton, author of *Justice Deferred: Race and the Supreme Court*

"Lowe's work makes a powerful case that South Carolina has and continues to be the front line of Black struggles for equality and justice and an exemplar of White supremacy's dogged hold on American life and institutions." — Peter F. Lau, author of *Democracy Rising: South Carolina and the Fight for Black Equality since 1865*

Palmetto College Faculty and Staff Notes



Shemsi Alhaddad, associate professor of mathematics and statistics at USC Lancaster, presented a talk on contemporary data visualization titled "Using Embroidery

to Visualize the Weather and More!" at [MathFest](#), the Math Association of America's (MAA) annual meeting, on Aug. 6, 2021.



Gale Ashmore, instructor of Spanish at USC Union, has received a funded TalkAbroad curriculum development grant for implementation

during the Spring 2022 semester. The TalkAbroad grant is awarded by the [TalkAbroad Company](#) and worth up to \$3,000. It will allow all of Ashmore's Spanish students to have authentic conversations with native Spanish speakers throughout the spring semester via video chat. TalkAbroad has conversation partners in multiple countries. Students will have the opportunity to select a partner from whichever country they prefer and then schedule a 15-minute conversation with that partner. Students enrolled in Spanish 109 will have three conversations throughout the semester and Spanish 110 and 122 students will have four conversations.



Adam Biggs, instructor of African American studies and history at USC Lancaster, was selected to be a 2021 [Gilder Lehrman Society Fellow](#). It provides

funding for historical research in New York City archival collections. His research focuses on Black doctors and the desegregation of Harlem Hospital between 1919-1935.



Li Cai, professor of chemistry at USC Lancaster, has been nominated for the [Series on Training for Advanced Research](#) (STAR) program through

the Office of the Vice President for Research at UofSC. The program is geared towards senior faculty researchers who are interested in learning about applying for and running an interdisciplinary, federally funded research center. Additionally, Cai presented at the 12th annual [UofSC Oktoberfest: A Symposium on Teaching](#); his presentation was titled "Apply student research to a wider audience — teaching."



Jill Castiglia, senior instructor of chemistry at USC Lancaster, has written a CHEM 101 lab manual which, in addition to being used on the USCL campus, is being adopted by USC Sumter.



Walter Collins, USC Lancaster campus dean and professor of French and English, was recently accepted into the fourth cohort of the [Branch](#)

[Campus Leadership Institute](#) (BCLI) of the [National Association of Branch Campus Administrators](#) (NABCA). The BCLI leadership program is a seven-month program conducted via Zoom that culminates with a capstone presentation given at the NABCA annual conference in May 2022. The capstone project brings to bear the analytic abilities, professional understanding and contextual knowledge accrued and sharpened throughout the program and closely mirrors the challenges found in modern-day higher education.



Stephen Criswell, professor of English and director of Native American studies at USC Lancaster, received a grant from the [South Carolina Arts Commission's](#)

[Folklife and Traditional Arts Program](#) for a project involving [Alex Osborn](#) photographing Catawba artists who have been in our art residency programs. He has also been appointed to the Lancaster County Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee as the Cultural Community representative.



David Dangerfield, assistant professor of history at USC Salkehatchie, co-wrote an op-ed that was recently published by *The Washington Post* titled "[Portraying](#)

[Plantations as Luxury Real Estate Downplays the Legacy of Slavery](#)." He also presented a paper, "Fighting to Pass: Free Persons of Color and the Confederate Army," at the 2021 Association for the Study of African American Life and History Conference.



Jason Darby, director of marketing and communications for USC Palmetto College, co-authored a book chapter with Christian K.

Anderson, associate professor in the UofSC Columbia College of Education. The chapter, titled "Richard T. Greener at the Reconstruction-Era University: Professor, Librarian and Student," appears in [Invisible No More: The African American Experience at the University of South Carolina](#), edited by Robert Greene II and Tyler D. Parry and published by University of South Carolina Press in December 2021.



Elizabeth Easely, associate professor of exercise science at USC Lancaster, and **Sarah Sellhorst**, professor of exercise science at USC Lancaster, used an RPS grant to spend the summer writing a lab manual for the BIOL 243 lab that incorporates undergraduate research concepts and experiences into the lab. They

have debuted the lab manual in classes this fall, and it has been a great success. They are currently in the process of writing the BIOL 244 Lab manual and hope to implement it in the Spring 2022 semester.



Julia Elliott, professor of English and women's and gender studies in Palmetto College Columbia, was recently interviewed on the Lit Hub Radio

podcast on "[Writing Rural America](#)." She was also featured in the [Oct. 9 post](#) on "The Blog of Awesome Women." And Elliott was reviewed and interviewed by some Spanish periodicals about the Spanish translation of her story collection [The Wilds](#), most notably by [Núvol: El digital de cultura](#). That Spanish translation, [Lo Salvaje](#), is the first title published by Catalan publishing house Horror Vacui.



Jennifer Emsweiler, assistant professor of fine arts at USC Union, has been featured in several juried art exhibitions, including the

Spartanburg County Library Eighth Annual Juried Exhibition (August-October

Fall/Winter 2021

2021) and the [Fusion Art Seventh Annual Colorful Abstractions Juried Virtual Art Exhibition](#) (November 2021). She also completed a painting for the [Bullets and Band-aids](#) traveling art exhibition that began its tour on Nov. 10 in Columbia, S.C., and traveled throughout the Carolinas through Dec. 2. Emsweiler also created websites for the virtual presentations of the [2021 Upcountry Literary Festival](#) presented annually by USC Union and the [USC Union Art Club's first student art show](#) due to COVID-19 restrictions.



Pearl Fernandes, professor of biology at USC Sumter, along with the assistance of Daniel Kiernan, recently led a student research project that studied

the relative fitness of student athletes versus non-athletes. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, some of the research was conducted in a makeshift, outdoor laboratory. Samara Castleberry and John Freeman are the USC Sumter students that assisted with the study.



Rebecca Freeman, associate librarian and director of the Medford Library, has had a paper accepted for the 2022 [Dublin Gastronomy Symposium](#). Under

the theme "Food and Movement," the symposium will be held May 30 to June 1, 2022.



Fran Gardner, distinguished professor emerita of art and art history, [has been elected the new South Carolina chapter president of the National](#)

[Association of Women Artists \(NAWA\)](#). She also has work being exhibited with NAWA shows. She has one piece

titled "Practicing the Runes" in a virtual show titled "Layering" that features collage artists. Gardner also has a piece titled "Signs and Riddles" in the 132nd National Members exhibition at One Art Space in the Tribeca area of New York City and is featured in their recent quarterly magazine.



Kristina Grob, assistant professor of philosophy, was recognized as USC Sumter's Hugh T. Stoddard, Sr. Outstanding Faculty Member for 2020-2021.



Lisa Hammond, professor of English at USC Lancaster and director of faculty affairs at UofSC Columbia, published "Faithful," a poem, in the Spring/Summer

2021 edition of [Twelve Mile Review](#).



Claudia Heinemann-Priest, instructor of English at USC Lancaster, presented a Lunch and Learn presentation on June 17 about what happened to the SE Native Languages since first contact.



Mary Hjelm, professor of English in Palmetto College Columbia, will have a review of Emma Smith's *This is Shakespeare: How to Read the World's Greatest Playwright*

published in the upcoming edition of [Early Modern Literary Studies](#), an international journal covering the study of English literature and literary culture in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Palmetto College Faculty and Staff Notes



Daniel Kiernan, senior instructor of biology at USC Sumter, taught another successful year of USC Sumter's [Mad About Science Summer Camp](#)

for students ages 9-14. This was the 11th year for the camp and students were excited to have the class return to its in-person format with COVID-19 precautionary measures (i.e., masks, social distancing, sanitation etc.). Students were exposed to topics such as cell and marine biology, virology, environmental science, genetics, biochemistry and physics. Participants conducted scientific experiments and explored the environment in which they live.



Randall Ivey, senior instructor of English at USC Union, published a short story, "The Brief, Unhappy Existence of Gay Dobbin" in [Adelaide Literary Magazine](#),

a print and digital publication.



Wei-Kai Lai, professor of mathematics at USC Salkehatchie, with members of the Math Treasure Hunt Team at the Mathematical Association of

America (MAA) Southeastern section [designed and modified multiple math puzzles and led virtual "Math Escape Room" events for the MAA, including the annual national MAA conference, MathFest](#). He was also elected to serve as representative at-large for the interests of faculty at two-year colleges at MAA Congress; his term ends July 2024.



Patrick Lawrence, associate professor of English at USC Lancaster, published an essay, "[Transnational Sexualities](#)," in *Asian American Literature in*

Transition 1965-1996.



Todd Lekan, associate dean of academic and student affairs and professor philosophy, has a book manuscript, titled [William James and the Moral](#)

[Life: Responsible Self-Fashioning](#), that has been accepted for publication with Routledge Press in 2022. Additionally, Dr. Lekan has been invited to speak at an international seminar, titled: *Beyond the Inclusive School: The New Educational Paradigm of the 21st Century*, at the University della Basilicata Aula Magna in Potenza, Italy, Dec. 10-11. The title of his paper is "A Pragmatist Philosophy of Disability and Its Relevance for Transformative Education."



McKenzie Lemhouse, assistant professor of library science and assistant librarian of Medford Library at USC Lancaster, has joined the editorial

board of [South Carolina Libraries](#) as the book reviews editor. *South Carolina Libraries* is the official journal of the South Carolina Library Association. The refereed open-access journal is published biannually (Fall and Spring).



Steve Lowe, professor of history at USC Union and director of the liberal studies and organizational leadership bachelor's degree programs within

Palmetto College Columbia, recently authored a book, titled [The Slow Undoing: The Federal Courts and the Long Struggle for Civil Rights in South Carolina](#), published by the University of South Carolina Press in June 2021. To date, he has appeared on the [SC Lede podcast](#) and [Walter Edgar's Journal](#) on SCETV Radio to discuss the book. And, the treatise is a finalist for the [George C. Rogers Jr. Award](#), which is presented annually by the South Carolina Historical Society to the author of the best book of South Carolina history published during the previous year.



Randy Lowell, USC Union campus dean and professor of psychology, was co-awarded a grant to study "[Meditation as a means of reducing aggression and](#)

[racial implicit bias with an eyetracking shoot/no-shoot task](#)" by the Magellan Scholar Grant Program in the UofSC Columbia Office of Undergraduate Research. He will co-present a poster on the topic "Meditation as a means to reduction of implicit racial bias" at the forthcoming 68th Annual Meeting of the Southeastern Psychological Association in March 2022. Lowell has also been invited as a peer reviewer for article submission to *Reading Research Quarterly*.



Steve Lownes, assistant professor of world languages at USC Union and campus coordinator for the Center for Integrative and Experiential Learning, was

awarded a \$15,000 grant from the UofSC Columbia Office of Institutional Research, Assessment and Analytics to assess world languages taught at the Palmetto College Campuses using the ACTFL Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Languages (AAPPL). He was also awarded a film festival grant from [PRAGDA: Spanish Film Club](#), to show five Latin American films at USC

Union in November 2021. In addition, Lownes presented "Education, Contact and Competing Priorities: Literary Reactions to Public Administrative Reforms in 19th Century Spain" at the virtual 2021 [Mountain Interstate Foreign Language Conference \(MIFLC\)](#) in October 2021. And, a presentation proposal, titled "Where Theory Meets Practice: Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* as Primer for Language Learning and Service-Learning," was accepted for the Seventh Annual International Academic Forum's ([IAFOR](#)) [International Conference on Education](#) for January 2022 in Honolulu, Hawaii.



Ray McManus, professor of English at USC Sumter and director of faculty, curricula and courses for dual enrollment programs in Lexington and

Richland County, was recently published in *POETRY* magazine. His poem, "[Diehards](#)," deals with the past, the present and the future as it relates to parenting and gender roles, which is a theme in his next book. McManus, also serves as the current writer-in-residence at the Columbia Museum of Art (CMA) and hosts [CMA's Binder Podcast](#). The podcast features conversations with writers, artists, photographers and more. Some recent episodes have featured USC Sumter professors Michele Reese and Sunshine Dempsey. Two seasons of the podcast have already been released, and future seasons are in the production and planning stages. The podcast can be found on Spotify, Google Podcasts, Breaker, Pocket Casts, RadioPublic or on the CMA website, [columbiamuseum.org](#).



Sarah Miller, professor of history at USC Salkehatchie, recently wrote proposals for, and received, two grants for the Colleton County

Historical and Preservation Society

totaling \$15,000 for historic preservation and education in Colleton County. She is also on the steering committee for the creation of an Allendale County History Museum.



Justin Mogilski, assistant professor of psychology at USC Salkehatchie, had a chapter accepted for publication in the *Oxford Handbook of Evolutionary Psychology and Romantic Relationships*, titled "Maintaining multi-partner relationships: Evolution, sexual ethics, and consensual non-monogamy." Additionally, he presented original research at the Human Behavior and Evolution Society Conference, the International Congress of Psychology and the Northeastern Evolutionary Psychology Society conference.



Lee G. Morris, assistant professor of biology at USC Union, advised several students who were awarded Palmetto Undergraduate Research

Experience (PURE) grants, including: Travis Wendel for *Survey of Crayfish Species in Union County, SC: Emphasis on Documenting the Spread of Invasive Crayfish Species (Procambarus clarkii)*, Summer 2021; and Blaine Newton for *Analyzing hair and fibers from a commercial tsantsa (shrunken head)*, Summer 2021. She also made a short presentation of research projects in the Morris lab to the Union County STEM Summer Camp, with students Wendel and Newton in July 2021. Morris and Newton made a presentation to the USC Union Research Club's Virtual Lunch and Learn in October 2021, titled "Examination of Cross Hari Sections of a Shrunken Head (Tsantsa)." Wendel and Morris made a presentation to the USC Union Research Club's Fall 2021 Colloquium in December 2021, titled "Watch out for that Tree! A

Study of Plant Blindness." And, Morris contributed photos and edited the full Fall 2021 edition of the [South Carolina Midlands Master Naturalist Association's](#) newsletter.



Allan Pangburn, senior instructor of mathematics at USC Lancaster, is one of ten participants who have been accepted to participate in the Association for Educational Communications and Technology's 2021 [AECT 2021 Early Career Symposium](#) through the Research and Theory Division. This symposium is designed to help faculty get prepared for research intensive positions.



Leigh Pate, clinical assistant professor of nursing at UofSC Columbia (based at USC Lancaster), presented a poster in Washington D.C. at the National League for Nursing's Summit entitled *Innovation in Education: Virtual Simulation to the Rescue!* Additionally, Pate presented "Teen Pregnancy in South Carolina: Changing the Future Now" at Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of



Nursing's Biennial Convention, Nov. 6-10. **Ann Scott**, assistant professor of nursing at UofSC Columbia (based at USC Lancaster), and Joan Creed (from the UofSC College of Nursing) are also contributors to this presentation.

Palmetto College Faculty and Staff Notes



Andrew Pisano, associate professor of English at USC Union, will present a paper, titled "Cuisine de Composition: Experiential Food Writing in the First

Year College Composition Classroom" at the Hawaii University International Conference in Honolulu, Hawaii, in January 2022. Another paper, "Narrative Reckoning: Jay Atkinson's Massacre on the Merrimack and the Critique of Anti-Indian Memorialization," has been accepted for presentation at the [MELUS Conference](#) in New Orleans, La., in March 2022



Emily Schafer, assistant professor of psychology at USC Union, published an article, titled "[Adverse childhood experiences and risky behaviors in](#)

[male college students](#)," in the *Journal of American College Health*. She will also be presenting at the HUIC ASHE (Hawaii University International Conferences – Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences & Education) in January 2022 on "The Long-Term Impact of Trauma-Informed Care Training on Educators." And, Schafer will present at a continuing education session at the upcoming March 2022 Southeastern Psychological Association (SEPA) Conference in March 2022 on "The Traumatic and Ongoing Legacy of Slavery and Racism."



Brittany Taylor-Driggers, assistant professor of art at USC Lancaster and curator of collections and galleries, had a piece, titled *Looking Glass*, selected for

an [online exhibit and publication in "Book of Art: Children,"](#) an international juried exhibit with over 400 artists and 1500 works submitted.



Kevin Torres, instructor of world languages at USC Union, recently reviewed the fourth edition of *Sentieri*, an Italian textbook, organized a study abroad

experience for May 2022 to Eastern Europe and organized a forthcoming talk for a Holocaust survivor to speak to USC Union students and faculty in January 2022.



Yasmina Vallejos-Moreno, assistant professor of Spanish at USC Salkehatchie, presented a paper, "El efecto del tiempo en "La culpa es de los

tlaxcaltecas" y "Andamos huyendo Lola" de Elena Garro" at the Kentucky Foreign Languages Conference at the University of Kentucky in April 2021. She also had an article, titled "*Amuleto* and the Power of Testimony in Auxilio Lacouture's Speech," accepted for publication in *Revista Iberoamericana* in Spring 2022.

Transitions

New Staff Hires

- **Keith Ballington**, Director of Operations, USC Union
- **Calvin Gudgeon**, Facilities Coordinator, USC Sumter
- **Kelly Hawfield**, Administrative Assistant, Shaw AFB Programs, USC Sumter
- **Nicholas Jeter**, IT Technician, USC Union
- **Emerald McElveny**, Marketing Assistant, USC Sumter
- **Nada Morant-Wilson**, Director of Financial Aid and Veteran Affairs, USC Sumter
- **James Morrison**, Head Coach, Men's Golf, USC Sumter
- **Christine Nance**, Administrative Assistant, USC Sumter
- **Stacy Nance**, Executive Assistant to the Dean, USC Sumter
- **Amber Novotny**, Assistant Dean of Student Success and Enrollment
- **Julia Sorrells**, Assistant Tennis Coach, USC Sumter
- **Brandi Witherspoon**, Administrative Assistant, USC Sumter

Retirees

- **Frances Paula Epperson**, Executive Assistant to the Dean, USC Sumter
- **Lisa Jeffords**, Director of Financial Aid and Veteran Affairs, Sumter
- **Carol Reynolds**, Administrative Assistant for Academic and Student Affairs, USC Sumter
- **Jane Luther Smith**, Instructor of Music, USC Sumter, USC Sumter
- **Sheila Smoak**, Administrative Assistant, USC Salkehatchie

Need to schedule a COVID-19 vaccine?

There are several resources that can be used to schedule an appointment to receive a COVID-19 vaccine or booster, including: UofSC Columbia Student Health Services through [MyHealthSpace](#), the [CDC's Vaccine Administration Management System](#), [S.C. DHEC's vaccine locator tool](#), and [VaccineFinder.org](#).

Palmetto College tenure and promotion



Patrick Lawrence
USC Lancaster

Tenured and Promoted
to Associate Professor of
English



Andrew Pisano
USC Union

Tenured and Promoted
to Associate Professor of
English



Chris Bundrick
USC Lancaster

Promoted to
Full Professor of English



Kate Holland
USC Lancaster

Promoted to
Full Professor of Psychology

Palmetto College welcomes new faculty



Gale Ashmore
Non-Tenure Track
Instructor of Spanish
USC Union

Master of Arts in Spanish
University of South Carolina



Gowoon Choi
Instructor of Physics
USC Sumter

Master's in Physics Education
Ewha Womans University, South
Korea



Sunshine Dempsey
Instructor of English
USC Sumter

Ph.D. in English
University of South Carolina



Jessie Freyermuth
Instructor of Music
USC Sumter

Ph.D. in Musicology
University of Kansas



Vincent Frontero
Instructor of English
USC Sumter

Master of Fine Arts in
Creative Writing
West Virginia University



Subhi Hindi
Instructor of English
USC Sumter

Ph.D. in English
University of Houston



McKenzie Lemhouse
Assistant Professor of
Library Science
USC Lancaster

Master of Library and
Information Science
University of South Carolina



April Wolfe
Clinical Instructor of Nursing
USC Salkehatchie

Master of Science in Nursing
University of Phoenix

Not Pictured:

Luisa Melo, Assistant Professor of Management, USC Sumter

Lowell named new campus dean of USC Union

Randy Lowell is the new campus dean of the University of South Carolina Union.

His appointment was announced on Friday, July 23, 2021, by Palmetto College Chancellor Susan Elkins, who cited his exemplary record of progressive administrative leadership and teaching experience at USC Union.

"As USC Union moves forward in advancing its mission to our students, their families and surrounding communities, Dr. Lowell is the ideal person to lead the campus into a new era," Elkins said. "His leadership experience working in both faculty and key administrative roles at USC Union, particularly his strong leadership as interim dean since the early months of a global pandemic, are strong assets for a campus that is responsible for bringing an affordable, accessible and flexible higher education to South Carolinians."



Randy Lowell

Prior to his service as interim campus dean, Lowell served for four years as associate dean for academic and student affairs. During his time in both roles, the campus experienced record enrollment growth, significantly expanded course offerings and the Union campus had an 81.6 percent success rate for first-time, full-time freshmen entering in 2016. That rate is currently the highest in the state among all 20 two-year technical and Palmetto College campuses.

"I am excited to have the opportunity to lead USC Union," said Lowell. "I look forward to building upon our current momentum by providing enriching experiences for a growing student body, attending to the needs of the community that supports our success and working collaboratively with colleagues across the system to benefit USC Union, Palmetto College and the University of South Carolina System."

Lowell was unanimously recommended for the position by an eleven-member search committee, led by USC Lancaster Dean Walt Collins, representing a cross-section of stakeholders from USC Union's campus and community.

Lowell comes to this new role at USC Union with progressive experience and accomplishments at the campus. He began his teaching career at the Union campus in 2012, where he taught psychology, later achieving tenure. He holds the academic rank of Professor of Psychology. Lowell was named associate dean for academic and student affairs in 2016 and was appointed interim campus dean in 2020. In 2019, Lowell was named USC Union Distinguished Teacher of the Year, as voted on by his colleagues and students. In addition, he is a 2020 recipient of the Distinguished Research Service Award from the UofSC Columbia Office of the Vice President of Research.

Lowell's tenure as dean of USC Union officially began on August 1, 2021.

Alexander named Salkehatchie Leadership Institute director

Jackson Alexander has been named director of the Salkehatchie Leadership Institute.

"Jackson brings energy and enthusiasm to the Leadership Institute and we are pleased to welcome him to our team," said USC Salkehatchie Dean Chris Nesmith. "The SLI contributes a vital part of our mission, and I am excited to see his plans and ideas come to life to further engage with and support our communities."

The [Salkehatchie Leadership Institute](#) was established to stimulate economic development in Allendale, Bamberg, Barnwell, Colleton, Jasper, Beaufort and Hampton counties. Because he is a product of rural America, Alexander understands the needs and challenges the region faces.

"If we want to help small communities

and towns prosper, we must invest in the human capital of the region. SLI aims to elevate the communities it serves through leadership, community development, economic development and civic engagement. These endeavors align with my own belief that all individuals deserve access to educational and leadership opportunities that bolster their local economies," said Alexander.

Alexander has a vision for the institute and is ready to showcase what SLI can do.

"I'm thrilled to join the Salkehatchie family and to be part of an institution that plays such an important role in the community. Salkehatchie empowers those across its region through academic

and community programming which provides the knowledge and skills needed to cultivate progress," Alexander said.

"I'd like to expand Leadership Salkehatchie, grow our partnerships with local businesses and industries, invest in county leadership programming across the service area, and engage the area's youth in leadership and career development opportunities."

Alexander earned his Master of Science in Agricultural and Extension Education from the University of Arkansas and expects to complete his doctoral degree in Public Policy and Administration from Mississippi State University in 2022.



Jackson Alexander

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Palmetto College Campuses for the Fall 2021 and/or Spring 2022 semesters. (3) The Palmetto College Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Council has been charged with exploring potential differences in service commitments by demographics across campuses including, but not limited to, gender, race, and rank. The Campus Deans have been charged with reviewing access to campus resources including, but not limited to, IT and classroom amenities with recommendations for how to make access equitable. (4) The Chancellor, the Associate Provost, the Deans, and other academic leaders have worked with the Senate Leadership on whether the COVID-19 Provost Relief Measures should be tailored to Palmetto College in regard to scholarship and posted that information on the Palmetto College website. A full copy of the [Chancellor's Report](#) is available on the [faculty senate website](#).

Early 2022 marks a decade since the University of South Carolina Board of Trustees voted to approve the formation of Palmetto College, an ambitious endeavor that would initially launch as the Back to Carolina pilot program to reclaim former UofSC students who had left the institution(s) without completing a bachelor's degree. The next year would mark the full launch of Palmetto College to include four UofSC System institutions – USC Lancaster, USC Salkehatchie, USC Sumter and USC Union, as well as Palmetto College Columbia (née Extended University), the UofSC Fort Jackson Program, Continuing Education Programs and seven online bachelor's degree completion programs offered in partnership with USC Aiken, USC Beaufort, UofSC Columbia and USC Upstate.

Today, this vision that was approved in 2012, now includes the four Palmetto College Campuses, new

service locations in Indian Land (USC Lancaster), Lexington (Palmetto College Columbia) and Laurens (USC Union), expanded dual credit and early college opportunities for high school students across South Carolina and 20 online bachelor's degree programs and online bachelor's degree completion programs offered through our partner UofSC comprehensive institutions.

We look forward to a new year and the ten-year celebration of Palmetto College, as well as the 50th anniversary of the partnership that spawned the USC Fort Jackson Program.

As we end the Fall 2021 semester, please know how very much your many efforts are appreciated! You continue to transform lives across South Carolina every day!

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

Leadership Salkehatchie Institute announces 21st cohort

The **USC Salkehatchie Leadership Institute** welcomed the Class of 2022 at a reception in September. The 21st cohort of Leadership Salkehatchie includes professionals from businesses and organizations within the five-county service region. They include: **Michelle Altman** (Hampton), **William Barnes** (Hampton), **Maryann Blake** (Colleton), **Austrai Bradley** (Barnwell), **Nathan Catoe** (Barnwell), **Alicia Davis** (Barnwell), **Leslie Holman-Brooks** (Bamberg), **Natalia Johnson** (Barnwell), **Marilyn Myrdal** (Allendale), **Kevin Smalls** (Colleton), **Dawn Stuckey** (Hampton), **Walter "Bo" White** (Jasper) and **Elizabeth Wooten** (Hampton).

"Leadership Salkehatchie has consistently developed the leadership talent within our region for over 20 years. I am excited to welcome this year's class and look forward to offering the program again with support from our partner, SouthernCarolina Alliance," said USC Salkehatchie Dean **Chris Nesmith**.

Leadership Salkehatchie participants attend eight monthly sessions on a range of topics encompassing the strengths and opportunities of the region including leadership development, community engagement, economic development, education, legislative advocacy and the judicial system. The sessions are designed to increase engagement within the community while motivating participants to develop ideas to move the Salkehatchie region forward. The program will conclude with participants designing and implementing a group project that identifies and addresses an issue in our communities.

"SouthernCarolina Alliance has sponsored the regional leadership program in partnership with USC Salkehatchie for more than 20 years because the development of strong leaders is paramount to the future of economic development in our region," said **Kay Maxwell**, vice president of marketing for SouthernCarolina.

"Our most valuable marketable product to prospects is our 'talent' or workforce. It's imperative that we identify and foster the emerging leaders and talent in our region so that they will have a comprehensive understanding of our region's assets and challenges, as well as those we will be dealing with over the coming decades."

Leadership Salkehatchie is a competitive program for regional professionals, including business leaders, educators, political leaders and law enforcement and offers insight into the issues that affect economic development such as workforce training, infrastructure, health care, education, taxes and quality of life. Since its inception, more than 200 men and women have participated in Leadership Salkehatchie with most of those participants currently residing in the area. Additional information about the USC Salkehatchie Leadership Institute can be found at uscsalkehatchieleadership.org.

USC Sumter/USC Aiken nursing partnership hosts Dedication of Hands ceremony for new students

This fall, USC Sumter introduced in partnership with USC Aiken, a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program. In October, the new program held a Dedication of Hands ceremony for the new nursing students.

Inspired by [Jean Watson's philosophy and theory of nursing](#), the ceremony is an act of caring for first semester nursing students before their clinical experience with patients.

The ceremony emphasizes the art and science of nursing through a series of symbolic acts. The students hands are washed, dried and oil is applied to their palms. The ceremony, which is now being used at many campuses across the country, was [created by Julia Ball and Thayer Wilson McGahee of the USC Aiken School of Nursing](#).



Salkehatchie BSN grads, [continued from page 1](#)

opportunity to earn a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree while remaining on the Salkehatchie campus. The undergraduate curriculum combines professional education in nursing with a strong foundation in the liberal arts. Introductory nursing courses focus on the history of the nursing profession, nursing math, medical terminology, nutrition and much more.

During upper division, students acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to provide care for complex health problems of individuals, families, and communities. Clinical practice is supported by concurrent classroom study and lab activities performed in the high-fidelity simulation lab housed on the Walterboro campus. Simulation prepares

our students to provide exceptional health care by allowing repetitive practice without direct risk to patient safety and by giving students an opportunity to work in groups, enhancing teamwork, collaboration and communication.

The program, which originated in 2006, has an 99% overall pass rate for all cohorts.

Niche rankings, [continued from page 1](#)

Lancaster, Laurens, Sumter, Union and Walterboro communities. The campuses confer associate degrees to graduates and partner with baccalaureate-granting University of South Carolina System institutions to offer the flexibility to complete bachelor's degree programs on campus or via Palmetto College Online.

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. A detailed explanation of methodology can be found [here](#).

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.

USC Lancaster's Native American Studies Center celebrates Indigenous contributions to STEAM

In November, USC Lancaster's Native American Studies Center hosted its 16th Annual Native American Studies Week. Under the theme "Indigenous Contributions in STEAM," the NASC celebrated Native contributions to the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math.

The slate of events, held between Nov. 15-19, included an art exhibit reception, an artist talk and programs on the chemistry of Catawba pottery and Indigenous medicine and health practices.

A talk on Indigenous foodways, "Indigenous Science and the Three Sisters Diet," from [Chef Dave Smoke-McCluskey](#) (Mohawk) concluded the week. Based in North Augusta, S.C., McCluskey is the owner of Corn Mafia Hominy, specializing in small batch hominy, and has been the chef-in-residence for the Chickasaw Nation's children's art program for the past two summers.

Originally from upstate New York, Chef McCluskey is a forager who has been in foodways for over 40 years and teaches others about Indigenous foodways, hominy and nixtamalization, the process by which corn is treated

and softened to make hominy. The chef discussed the [Three Sisters agricultural practice](#) of growing corn, beans, and squash in the same mound, as well as the loss of traditional foodways within Indigenous communities.

"I tend to look at a lot of things and go, 'what do we do with this?'," said McCluskey. "Some of what I talk about is not losing our foodways for the sake of decolonizing our diets when we don't really know what our diets were."

Other events held during the week included:

"The Chemistry of Catawba Indian Pottery" (Nov. 15) – Art Greenberg, professor emeritus of chemistry at the University of New Hampshire, discussed the science of art in a presentation that analyzed the chemistry of Catawba pottery. This lecture was co-sponsored by the USC Lancaster

Chemistry Club.

"Medicine among the Aztecs" (Nov. 16)

– Kim Richardson, associate professor of history at USC Lancaster, explored the complexities of medicine, childbirth, sanitation, diseases and other issues within the Aztec Empire to discover what can be learned and applied to current concerns.

"Indigenous Inventions Through the Ages" (Nov. 17) – Participants were able to learn more about Indigenous inventions, innovations and other contributions to the field of STEAM in the new exhibit.

"Artist Talk: An Evening with Alex Osborn" (Nov. 18) – [Alex Osborn](#) (Catawba), the NASC summer contemporary artist-in-residence,

presented a talk about his residency in the Center's Five Points Gallery.



Chef Dave Smoke-McCluskey (Mohawk) presented a lecture on Indigenous science and the "Three Sisters" agricultural diet of corn, beans and squash as part of the 16th Annual Native American Studies Week hosted by the USCL Native American Studies Center.

USC Salkehatchie opens student food pantries on Allendale and Walterboro campuses to address food insecurity

As many are preparing for their holiday celebrations, some college students are wondering where they will get their next meals. To help combat this problem, USC Salkehatchie has opened food pantries on both the Walterboro and Allendale campuses to help students facing food insecurity. Estimates indicate that about half of U.S. college students lack the resources needed to feed themselves nutritiously or consistently. This often leads to students missing classes and, ultimately, poor academic performance.

"We are happy to be able to confidentially provide free food and toiletries to students who may otherwise spend their day hungry,"

said Jackson Alexander, director of the USC Salkehatchie Leadership Institute. "Students who face food insecurity may struggle to focus academically and may eventually drop out of college. Our food pantries are an additional support we can provide to help ensure student success."

The pantries will serve approximately 400 students and operate out of the respective campus shops each Tuesday and Friday from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Students simply present their Carolina Card to receive items from the food pantry. Recipient information is not recorded.

Funding for the pantries is provided by The Sisters of Charity, the Coastal Community Foundation Winthrop Fund

and individual donations. Anyone who wishes to help with the food pantry can do so.

"We welcome donations of nonperishable goods. Just drop them by the Campus Shop on each campus," said Suzanne Goodson, Salkehatchie grants manager. "We are grateful that several of our athletics teams have recently helped to stock our shelves by making food contributions."

Proteins, vegetables, fruits and toiletries are a few of the most needed items.

For more information about the USC Salkehatchie Food Pantries contact [Suzanne Goodson](#) or [Lamar Hewett](#) in the Campus Shop on either campus.

Fire Ant grads, old and new, return to Sumter for Alumni Weekend



In October, the USC Sumter Alumni Association hosted its first Alumni Weekend event in many years. The weekend began with a mixer on Friday night at a hotel in downtown Sumter. On Saturday, the softball team hosted an alumni game. A family picnic followed which featured great food, activities for kids, a tour of campus updates, and a special visit from Blaze the Fire Ant. Alumni from the 1980s all the way to recent 2020 graduates attended and shared many memories of their time at USC Sumter. The committee and attendees felt the weekend was very successful and dates for next year's event have already been set.

USC Salkehatchie communities celebrate Garnet and Gold Week

The City of Walterboro along with Allendale and Colleton counties proclaimed Oct. 24-30 as Garnet and Gold Week to celebrate the significant educational and cultural contributions the University of South Carolina Salkehatchie provides the citizens of the region.

"USC Salkehatchie is a vital component of the region's educational system, providing one of the most cost-effective paths to a college education through programs offered at the University of South Carolina. We want everyone to join us during Garnet and Gold Week as we celebrate the many opportunities we provide," said Jackson Alexander, director of the USC Salkehatchie Leadership Institute.

Some of the recent successes include:

- earning a 100% first-time pass rate for six straight years on the NCLEX licensure exam
- by students in our Rural Nursing Initiative program;
- awarding over \$3.655 million in scholarships and grants to our students in 2020-21;
- providing opportunities for qualified high school students to earn college credit through our early college program;
- providing innovative programs such as the Opportunity Scholars Program and University of Possibilities which help low-income and first-generation students succeed;
- winning Region X championships and advancing to national tournaments in women's basketball (2021), softball (2021) and men's basketball (2020);
- providing leadership training, summer enrichment programs, and community interest classes to the citizens of



USC Salkehatchie STEM Program Manager Holly McCrary and STEM ambassadors provided experiments for visitors at the Colleton County Farmers Market during Garnet and Gold Week.

- the region; and generating a regional economic impact of \$41.6 million and an employment impact of 437 jobs.
- The week's events included a packed schedule of student activities as well as community gatherings

including Open House, Basketball Madness Expo and USC Salkehatchie at the Farmers Market. Student activities included a pumpkin decorating contest, a costume contest, an office decorating contest and a baseball versus softball costume wiffleball game.

New USC Sumter Call Me MiSTER program aims to diversify K-12 education ranks

The Education Program at USC Sumter announced the addition of the Call Me MiSTER program to campus this fall. The first cohort of MiSTERs includes two students:

Jordan Blanding and **Gwenden Baldwin**.

The Call Me MiSTER program, developed and supported by Clemson University, aims to bring more men of color into the education profession. The program focuses on mentoring, academic support, and financial support for these future teachers. The goal of the USC Sumter program is to also foster a commitment with the students to become educators in the Sumter community.

In addition to engaging in professional development, mentorship and advocacy, the Call Me MiSTER participants will be part of a living-learning community. They will live together, study together and meet with their site coordinator and mentor, local teacher Micah Vaughn. USC Sumter's Call Me MiSTER program is supported by the Liberty STEAM Charter School, which will provide an annual stipend for the site coordinator and a \$5,000 scholarship towards housing for each student.

"We are so honored to have the Call Me MiSTER program at USC Sumter. We need more men and, specifically, men of color in education. Nationally, over half of students are students of color, while

approximately 85 percent of teachers are white women," said **Christina Lunsmann**, coordinator and instructor of teacher education at USC Sumter. "It is vitally important for all children to



(From left) Jordan Blanding, USC Sumter Call Me MiSTER participant; Micah Vaughn, Call Me MiSTER Site Coordinator; and Gwenden Baldwin, USC Sumter Call Me MiSTER participant.



(From left) Roy Jones, executive director of the Call Me MiSTER program at Clemson University and Jordan Blanding, USC Sumter's first Call Me MiSTER participant.

see people like them in professional roles. Call Me MiSTER helps meet that need because it encourages more exceptional men of color to enter into teacher education."

Two incoming USC Union students receive scholarships from local civic organization



For more than 20 years, the Benevolent, Patriotic Order of DOES #148 of Union has presented a scholarship to USC Union to support higher education. The scholarship is awarded annually to one male and one female incoming freshman student. **Hayley Palmer** and **Robert Kennington** were the 2020-2021 recipients; **Brittany Hightower** and **Trent Turner** are the 2021-2022 recipients.

The Benevolent, Patriotic Order of DOES #148 was established in Union, S.C., in November 1957. The DOES promote social activities among members, promote generous work in the community and they are active with their charity and social projects. During the year, the Does have bake sales and other campaigns to raise funds for Meals on Wheels, American Cancer Society, Union High School Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Union Miracle League, Ronald McDonald House and even more philanthropies. They also donate gifts to residents at Heartland Health Care during the holidays.

Formed nationally in 1868, the DOES work in harmony with the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks and are organized along similar lines.

Robertson named first Genesis Healthcare Scholarship recipient



(From left:) April Cone, clinical assistant professor/nursing academic program manager for USC Salkehatchie; Kayla Robertson, scholarship recipient; and Howard Nettles, director of community outreach and recruiting for Genesis Healthcare.

Genesis Healthcare and USC Salkehatchie are pleased to announce that **Kayla Robertson** is the inaugural recipient of the Genesis Healthcare Scholarship for pre-nursing and nursing students. Kayla, a mother of two boys ages 7 and 12, has worked in the healthcare field for the last eleven years as a certified pharmacy technician at a local drugstore. But, after witnessing the medical care of her dad and dealing with her own personal health care trials, Kayla decided to move beyond the retail environment and continue helping others by pursuing a nursing career.

"The nursing profession needs more compassionate, driven hands to care for others in our community. I enjoy helping others and cannot wait to make a difference," Kayla said.

USC Salkehatchie was the best choice for Kayla because she could be close to home, work and her family. The program's six-year, 100-percent NCLEX-RN pass

rate meant that she would receive the best possible training without leaving her community.

"I am aware that nursing school is very demanding and challenging, but I am up for the challenge," Kayla said.

The scholarships provide assistance to students who are in the upper division of the nursing program at USC Salkehatchie, making it easier for students to focus on academics instead of finances.

Students at USC Salkehatchie have the opportunity to complete a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree without leaving the Salkehatchie campus through a partnership with USC Beaufort. The four-year undergraduate program is designed to provide students with the skills necessary to competently manage the health care of individuals and communities. The curriculum combines professional education in nursing with a strong foundation in liberal arts.

USC Union luncheon links students with scholarship donors



USC Union hosted its annual **Scholar Donor Luncheon** on Oct. 28 at the Main Street Junction in downtown Union, S.C. The event, hosted by USC Union Financial Aid Director **Bobby Holcombe**, allowed scholarship recipients to meet campus donors to discuss how their gifts to the institution have impacted their education. Six new scholarships were presented this year and three of the six new scholarships reached the endowment level.

This year, USC Union freshman **Kallee Garner**, USC Union sophomore **Blaine Newton**, and USC Palmetto College junior **Caden Jackson** served as student speakers at the event. Each student talked about how a scholarship helps them succeed in the classroom and their future plans after graduation.



(From left) Philanthropist Barbara Rippy, Union County School Superintendent Joey Haney, USC Union Marketing and Development Director Annie Smith, USC Union supporter Joanne Haney and USC Union Campus Dean Randy Lowell.

USC Salkehatchie STEM program provides opportunities and financial incentives

USC Salkehatchie's Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) program is providing a new wave of growth and creativity for those ready to pursue a STEM career. One new, innovative program is the STEM Careers 101 class offered for the first time this past summer.

Seventeen students from Allendale, Barnwell, Colleton and Hampton counties completed the first-of-its-kind elective course created and led by USC Salkehatchie's STEM Coordinator **Holly McCrary** as part of the WORC grant programs. The class explored a broad range of STEM skills including computer programming, chemistry, biology, mathematical functions in cybersecurity, and environmental awareness. Students also explored non-technical skills including research, planning, resume development, interviewing and self-advocacy, while gaining insights into regional STEM

careers, employer expectations and next steps for furthering their education and training. The grant and its programs are made possible by a partnership with the Savannah River Site Community Reuse Organization and the U.S. Department of Energy.

"Often, students don't realize the many STEM opportunities available at USC Salkehatchie," McCrary said. "The partnerships and resources we have are unique and, frankly, not common at other institutions. Our students receive individualized attention. Those who are eligible can earn credit hours while participating in paid internships during their freshman and sophomore years. Additionally, funding is available for students to conduct STEM research for publication. Typically, these opportunities

are not available to students until their junior or senior years."

After completing the course and a STEM program internship with **Eran Kilpatrick** in the USC Salkehatchie Herbarium, sophomore **Zachery Wilson** decided to transfer from the University of South Carolina Columbia Campus to USC Salkehatchie because of his experience with the program and its incentives.

"I love the smaller class sizes, individualized attention, and the fact I

students have. Scholarships of \$5,000 combined with LIFE or Palmetto Fellow scholarships leave no out-of-pocket tuition for students to pay. Additional internships, ambassadorships, tutoring positions and research opportunities not only provide valuable experiences, but also generate overage funds that can be used at the discretion of the student.

"Students who qualify and take advantage of STEM financial incentives can receive up to \$20,000 if they participate in all our initiatives.

Salkehatchie's tuition is only around \$7,500 annually," McCrary said. Wilson said he is saving his overage for completion of his degree at USC Aiken.

USC Salkehatchie's STEM program also emphasizes career exploration. In conjunction with the 2021 National Nuclear Science Week (Oct. 18-21), all USC Salkehatchie students were able to participate



receive the same level of instruction in my courses as I did on the Columbia campus," Wilson said. "Participating in my internship put me ahead of where I would be for employability purposes. I have gained valuable hands-on experiences and have already been promoted to lab manager as a sophomore, which would have been highly improbable at other campuses. My advisor, Mrs. McCrary, has been invaluable in advising me academically and keeping me informed of specific financial, experiential and internship opportunities only available to students involved with the USC Salkehatchie WORC grants."

Wilson is taking advantage of the many opportunities USC Salkehatchie STEM

in Career Week. Students had the opportunity to interact with alumni during a virtual interview, industry professionals during two panel discussions, and attend seminars on resume writing and employability skills. The week culminated with a career fair which connected students with regional employers and provided opportunities for current students to interact with experts from a variety of fields.

Students can complete the first two years of many STEM majors at USC Salkehatchie including industrial process engineering, biology, chemistry and mathematics. Students can also complete an online degree in Applied Computer Science with emphasis in Cybersecurity through Palmetto College.

Gary and Ellen Horn: Planning ahead to create opportunities

It's only about 50 miles from the peach orchards of Johnston, S.C., to the University of South Carolina's Columbia campus. But for Ellen Boatwright Horn, leaving home to attend the university changed her life, launched a successful career and shaped her appreciation for the value of a college education.

"My father was a peach farmer and we lived three miles outside of town, so going to the University of South Carolina opened up a whole new world for me," said Ellen, who graduated in 1968 with a degree in business education. "I met so many wonderful people and had a great time. The school has always been very important to me."

Ellen moved to Atlanta after graduation, took a job in sales and met her husband, Gary, while they were both working for a large bank. Since then, they've moved up and down South Carolina's coast — Hilton Head, Myrtle Beach, Summerville and Beaufort — and are now retired in Columbia. Keeping up with



Gary and Ellen Horn have committed a significant gift in support of students who attend USC Palmetto College Campuses, as well as those who enroll in bachelor's degree programs and bachelor's degree completion programs through Palmetto College Online.

her sorority sisters has spawned many happy memories about the university and prompted Ellen to give back.

"My husband has the same affinity for Georgia Southern, his alma mater, that I do for South Carolina, so we've made each institution the beneficiary of one of our retirement accounts," Ellen said.

The couple's gift to the University of South Carolina will benefit USC Palmetto

College, which oversees online bachelor's degree completion programs, as well as UofSC system campuses at Lancaster, Salkehatchie, Sumter and Union.

"We want to help people from underserved areas of the state who can't afford to attend a university but who deserve the opportunity," she said.

Ellen and Gary Horn are now members of the university's Horseshoe Society and already finding other ways to get involved, including a donation of professional clothing to the Veteran Student Success Center, which maintains a lending wardrobe for job interviews.

Find your own way to give back and join the Horseshoe Society, which is open to those who make cumulative lifetime gifts of \$100,000 or more to the university.

To learn more about how you can make an impact on Palmetto College students, programs and community initiatives, please contact [Chris Dewolf](#), senior director of development.

Renovated Starr Hall and student center reopen at USC Lancaster



The re-opening celebration for Starr Hall at USC Lancaster was held on Nov. 10.

Starr Hall, which serves as a "one-stop shop" for student services, houses the student center, counseling center, financial aid office and related services.

Over the summer months, Starr Hall was renovated to include an improved arrival point and main entryway with enhanced visibility, accessibility, and appearance and the reconfiguration of office areas to better accommodate service needs. Improvements to the student center were also completed.

This event, with food trucks, prizes and other activities, was sponsored through the generosity of one of USCL's corporate partners, the Indian Land, S.C.-based INSP Television Network.

USC Salkehatchie athletic teams learn community history in “Amazing History Race”

The University of South Carolina Salkehatchie men’s basketball, women’s basketball and women’s volleyball teams recently competed in an “Amazing History Race” sponsored by the Colleton County Historical and Preservation Society.

“Learning about the local history of where you live is an important part of appreciating your home,” said Sarah Miller. “The athletes from USC Salkehatchie joined the Colleton County Historical and Preservation Society to participate in the Amazing History Race to learn about Lowcountry history, team-building, and to win some prizes.”

The Amazing History Race is based on the television show *The Amazing Race*, but focuses on activities related to the Carolina Lowcountry. This year, the USC Salkehatchie volleyball team, women’s basketball team and men’s basketball team participated in the Race at the Bedon-Lucas House. The race focused on four aspects of local history.

The first was a reminder that the Lowcountry was once part of the **ocean floor**. Participants dug through a sand-filled pool looking for shark teeth.

The next pit stop represented the **importance of rice** to the formation of South Carolina. Players had to guess the number of grains of rice in a bowl to proceed.

To demonstrate the **Cyclone of 1879**, which devastated most of Walterboro, contestants spun on a bat like a tornado and then had to successfully navigate a course to complete the task.

The last pit stop recognized the **Tuskegee Airmen** who trained at

the airfield in Walterboro. To complete the last task, participants had to make a paper airplane and land it on the runway. The race was timed for each player.

“While some of the student-athletes at Salkehatchie come from the Lowcountry, and even Walterboro, many come from across South Carolina, North Carolina, Florida, and as far as New York and Ohio. Giving them a little lesson in Lowcountry history while having some friendly competition with their teammates was a great way to start the school year,” Miller said.

The three participants with the fastest time to complete all four tasks received prizes that are important to the college experience: first place winners received laundry detergent, second place winners received dish detergent and sponges and third place winners received toilet paper.

The winners of the Amazing History Race were:



As part of their “Amazing History Race,” student-athletes at USC Salkehatchie participated in activities that taught them aspects of Carolina Lowcountry history. In one of four challenges, students (above) designed and flew paper airplanes inspired by the World War II-era Tuskegee Airmen who completed part of their training at a Walterboro, S.C., airfield.

USC Salkehatchie Volleyball

- Yanelis Rodriguez
- Imani Wharton
- Zelia Ibarra

USC Salkehatchie Women’s Basketball

- Seniya Brooks
- Kolia Adams
- Lakeyn Boyd

USC Salkehatchie Men’s Basketball

- Kharye Cayne
- Kailee White
- Diamante Brown



Congratulations to USC Lancaster! USCL has been ranked No. 1 on the list of the Best Associate Degree Colleges in South Carolina by [University HQ](#).

USCL receives Promise Neighborhood Grant to expand K-12 partnership activities

The **Promise Neighborhood Grant**, announced in late September, will provide funding for extensive programmatic activities across early-childhood, elementary, middle, and high school levels. As a participant stakeholder for post-secondary education, USC Lancaster will partner to offer space for an annual career and career exploration fair for students in the pipeline. Additionally, USCL will assist in providing sessions for students and their families focusing on general college-going awareness as well as an expanded Summer STEM Camp and an expanded and enhanced Summer Bridge Program for students between high school and college. Finally, USCL will help with test-prep for the ACT/SAT and workshops focused on navigating the costs of college with topics such as financial aid, the FAFSA application, and awareness of state scholarships (Life, Hope, and Palmetto Fellows).

The [Promise Neighborhood](#) program, funded by the U.S. Department of Education, is also a strategy for addressing the issues faced by communities in distress. Strong lead organizations and partners, like USCL, work to ensure that over time all children in a Promise Neighborhood have access to a continuum of solutions, or pipeline, that support them from cradle to career. By “braiding” federal and other resources, communities can create opportunity and achieve better results for all. Promise Neighborhoods build pipelines of programs, service and supports so that children and youth in distressed communities can succeed in school and beyond. This is one piece of a multi-agency strategy to address struggling schools, high unemployment, poor housing, persistent crime, and other problems in high-poverty neighborhoods.

Spring middle school poetry contest returns to USC Sumter

After a long hiatus, the Spring Poetry Contest was once again hosted by USC Sumter.

This was the 36th time that the campus had organized the event. Under the guidance of **Michele Reese**, professor of English at USC Sumter, students in her English 360 Creative Writing course participated as part of the class’ community service project.

The students’ participation provided credit towards their Graduation with Leadership Distinction honors. The

student committee assisted in tasks such as planning and marketing the competition, securing prizes and judging the poems.

The competition saw 111 entries from Sumter County middle schools. The winners were announced during a virtual presentation which featured readings from the contest’s finalists. **Elyas Chatriwala**, a sixth grader at Hillcrest Middle School, won first place for his poem “Ode to a Jellyfish.”



Lady Bantams softball team fundraiser enhances equipment offerings

USC Union’s **Lady Bantams softball team** hosted a “Double Good Popcorn” fundraiser during the Fall 2021 semester. Through the four-day fundraiser, the team received 50% of the proceeds from each purchase.

This year, the softball team sold over \$10,000 of popcorn to supporters across 15 states. In addition, the team was able to donate 56 bags of popcorn to essential workers. The funds raised will help the softball team purchase new equipment, training essentials and other items for their field.

Alongside this effort, this was the first year that the **Grace Revels and Mia Stokes Endowed Scholarship** was awarded. USC Union created this scholarship in memory of two Lady Bantam softball players that died in February 2020.

USC Union alumna **Grace Lee** is the inaugural recipient. The Pauline, S.C., native played infield for the Lady Bantams from 2018-2020 and is now enrolled in the USC Aiken Bachelor of Science in Nursing program based on the USC Union campus.

Simmons voted NJCAA Region X Women's Soccer Player of the Year

Several Palmetto College student-athletes named to All-Region teams

Rayna Simmons was voted the NJCAA Region X Women's Soccer Player of the year!

She led the region with 15 goals scored during the regular season and is currently

No. 8 in the nation in goals scored across all Division I junior colleges.

She is USC Lancaster women's soccer team captain and

an excellent student in the lower division of the Bachelor of Science in Nursing program.

In addition, many USCL fall athletes were named to the Region X All-Region Teams for both soccer and volleyball.

NJCAA recognition included other Palmetto College campuses as well.

NJCAA Region X has also named four USC Salkehatchie soccer players to the All-Region Team, including: **Ignacio Velasquez** (First Team), **Sebastian Sepulveda** (Second Team), **Zhane Irving** (Third Team) and **Alphonso Moni** (Honorable Mention).

At USC Union, freshman **Aneesa Williams** was named to the All-Conference Volleyball Second Team. Several student-athletes also received honors including: **Jameon Williams** (Second Team Defense), **Daniel Cooper** (Second Team Mid Field) and **Steve Lopez** (Honorable Mention).



Rayna Simmons

USC Sumter's Freeman succeeds on and off the golf course despite adversity

USC Sumter golfer **Victoria "Tori" Freeman** is like many other freshman traversing her first year as a college athlete; however, Tori's path to college athletics has been quite different than most. While in utero, Tori had a stroke, and her entire left side was atrophied as a result. Growing up, she spent a lot of time in physical therapy, speech therapy and even had to undergo several surgeries.



Tori Freeman

Tori began playing sports in middle school. At that time the high school golf coach attended the same church as her family, and he convinced her to try golf for the first time. In the beginning, she golfed using only her right hand. She spent a lot of time learning the game and discovering new ways to swing the golf club effectively.

"When I tried golf for the first time, I knew I wanted to continue and try to play in college," said Tori.

During her senior year of high school, her father started to research colleges in their area with a women's golf program. He came across USC Sumter and immediately emailed Coach Bret Watzka, who in turn contacted Tori's high school coach, and by December of last year she had officially signed to play golf at USC Sumter beginning in Fall 2021.

When asked about her favorite thing about golf, Tori said, "meeting new friends and having opportunities to spend time with teammates and travel with them to tournaments." She feels her greatest strengths on the course are her short game and staying on the fairway all the way to the green.

Tori's goal is to obtain her associate degree from USC Sumter over the next two years, and she hopes to continue playing golf at a four-year institution in the future.

USC Lancaster tennis courts receive facelift



The renovation project for the USC Lancaster campus tennis courts was completed during the Fall 2021 semester.

All six courts were resurfaced, windscreens were replaced and awnings were installed. USCL leadership

expresses its gratitude to Rick Porter, Steve Williams and Pat Goldsmith for their work in spearheading this project, along with three very generous community partners who donated to this effort: Founders Federal Credit Union, Comporium and Nutramax Laboratories.

USC Union Anglers compete in Bassmaster College Series

Two members of the USC Union Anglers competed this past summer in the Carhartt Bassmaster College Series National Championship in New York. The tournament was held Aug. 12-14 at the St. Lawrence River. Around 130 teams from schools across the nation competed in the tournament.

"The Saint Lawrence River is known to fisherman as the mecca for Smallmouth bass fishing; Saint Lawrence County bills itself as the World's Fishing Capital 'Where the Pros come to Fish'," said USC Union Anglers Coach **Cameron Coone**. "The anglers can weigh in either Largemouth or Smallmouth bass."

Coone was named coach in July. He said he loves fishing and he is enjoying working with the team and giving back to the community through coaching.

"My grandfather, Randy Coone, had a fishing rod in my hand from the time I was old enough to walk," he said. "I remember growing up reading my grandfather's old *Bassmaster* magazines, watching Hank Parker's TV show, and flipping through the latest edition of the Bass Pro Shops catalog every free moment I had. I never really played youth sports because I was always at the lake fishing. I hope to instill my passion for the outdoors on to my kids, but I've also always tried to help anyone out that wanted to become a better outdoorsman.

coach locally. "I've had a connection with USC Union since 2011; it was my first real job out of college when I graduated from Presbyterian College," he said. "I've never had to hide my love for fishing, and they felt that my passion for the sport would be beneficial for the team. I saw a quote that said 'When opportunity knocks on your door, always be willing to take a chance, because you never know how perfect something could turn out to be.' And that is exactly how I've felt about this new job as head coach. I'm excited to see what the future holds."

Coone said there are opportunities for the community to help the team. "Soon I will start reaching out to businesses in Union, Laurens, and other Upstate counties for help with sponsoring the team," he said. "Any business that wants to help sponsor the team can have their business logo placed on our jersey. Fishing Jerseys are unique in that they are walking billboards and advertisements for businesses that travel all over the state and the country while we are at

tournaments. We've had teams go as far north as Michigan to compete, as well as all over the South to fish. Sponsorships help with the rising cost of transport to these locations. We will also have hats and shirts for sale at the USC Union



USC Union Anglers Coach Cameron Coone (center) and team. The Anglers competed in the Carhartt Bassmaster College Series National Championship in 2021.

Bookstore for sale."

The New York tournament was the last for Waldrop and Kershaw as USC Union students – both will move on to their next college locations after completing their first two years here.

"These guys persevered through a daunting schedule to qualify for this tournament," Coone said. "I have at least two guys fishing this fall for me, and I hope to increase that number once students return to campus for the start of classes. I've already been in talks with other high school coaches about meeting with their anglers and offering them the opportunity to fish at the next level."

Our team's Facebook ([USC Union Anglers](#)) and Instagram ([uscunionbantamsanglers](#)) accounts have been an excellent recruiting tool so far, and they are probably one of the best ways to reach out to me if anyone is interested in fishing while they attend USC Union."

Coone said his next goal is to start a College Kayak fishing division for the team. "It is something that is starting to get big in the college ranks and I think it would be a perfect fit for USC Union," he said.



Kids today are extremely lucky to have the opportunity to fish while they are in middle school, high school, and at the collegiate level."

Coone, who grew up in Jonesville, said he appreciates the opportunity to

USC Union Lady Bantams softball team gains Mizuno sponsorship

The USC Union Lady Bantams Softball team has become a Mizuno-sponsored team, joining the ranks of other NCAA (DI and DII) and NJCAA softball teams who use the Mizuno-branded apparel and equipment.

"Looking forward to the possibilities that lay ahead for our student-athletes through this new partnership with Mizuno, and I can't wait to cheer on our Bantams softball team this year in their new gear," said USC Union Campus Dean **Randy Lowell**.



"Building on the successes of the past, the future of USC Union softball program is bright and partnering with Mizuno will foster more opportunities for the Lady Bantams than ever before. Mizuno embodies the motto of "Reach Beyond" in all aspects of the game and in life and the Lady Bantams are excited to be a part of this incredible opportunity. As a team, we would like to thank all those who were involved in making this partnership a reality," said **William Royce**, head softball coach.

NJCAA honors Palmetto College Campuses student-athletes for academic performance

Athletic programs from the Palmetto College campuses and individual players are being honored for academic performance in much the same way that they are recognized for their athletic prowess.

The programs from the Palmetto College campuses – [USC Lancaster](#), [USC Salkehatchie](#), [USC Sumter](#) and [USC Union](#) – compete primarily within [Region X](#) of the National Junior College Athletic Association ([NJCAA](#)). [2020-21 NJCAA Academic Student-Athlete Awards](#) were presented to:

First Team

- Ruben Emmerson-Hiini, *USC Sumter, Men's Tennis*
- Grace Lee, *USC Union, Softball*
- Jacob McGee, *USC Union, Men's Soccer*
- Joshua Nelson, *USC Union, Baseball*

Second Team

- Austin Baal, *USC Union, Baseball*
- Caitlyn Crawford, *USC Union Softball*
- Brandon Griffin, *USC Sumter Men's Golf*
- Jackson Herring, *USC Sumter Baseball*
- Jeffrey Highsmith, *USC Sumter Baseball*
- Madelyn Hines, *USC Sumter*

Women's Tennis

- Keeley Hulse, *USC Sumter Softball*
- Cameron Jackson, *USC Union Softball*
- Karissa Johnson, *USC Sumter Softball*
- Heimanarii Lai San, *USC Sumter Men's Tennis*
- Wesley Livingston, *USC Union Baseball*
- Walter McKenny Goodale, *USC Sumter, Baseball*
- Thomas Oldham, *USC Union Men's Soccer*
- Jaime Sion, *USC Sumter Men's Tennis*

Third Team

- Sydney Blass, *USC Sumter Softball*
- Morgan Boudreau, *USC Sumter Softball*
- Cooper Bryson, *USC Sumter Baseball*
- Benjamin Coffey, *USC Union Men's Soccer*
- Andrew Griffin, *USC Sumter Men's Golf*
- Garrison Hendrix, *USC Union Baseball*
- Maggie Hunter, *USC Sumter Softball*
- Carlton Kinlaw, *USC Sumter Men's Golf*
- Nijah McGill, *USC Union Men's Soccer*
- Devyn Royce, *USC Union Softball*



The **2020-21 NJCAA Academic Teams of the Year** include: USC Sumter Men's Golf, USC Sumter Softball, USC Sumter Men's Tennis and USC Sumter Women's Tennis.

Teams have also won several championships earned in recent years.

USC Salkehatchie won the Division II Women's Basketball Region X/ Southeast District Championship in [April 2021](#). After completing undefeated regular season and regional championships, the team advanced to [this spring's national tournament](#).

USC Salkehatchie won the Division I Softball Region X Championship in [May 2021](#) and [May 2019](#).

USC Lancaster won the Division I Men's Soccer Region X championship in [May 2021](#).

USC Salkehatchie won the Division I Men's Basketball Region X/Atlantic District Championship in [March 2020](#). The team was awarded a national tournament appearance that was preempted due to the emerging COVID-19 pandemic.

USC Sumter won the DI Baseball Championship in [May 2018](#).



Happy Holidays!

University of South Carolina Palmetto College

The gift of an education is transformative for individuals, families, communities, and society as a whole. Our USC Palmetto College graduates, like those you see in this greeting, gain an accessible, affordable, and flexible University of South Carolina education and opportunities for social mobility for themselves and their families.

Please visit our website, palmettocollege.sc.edu, to learn more about our Palmetto College Campuses, Palmetto College Online, and our outstanding students and alumni.

Thank you for your continued support of USC Palmetto College this year. We wish you and yours a happy holiday season!

**Chancellor Susan Elkins
and the entire Palmetto College Family**

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