

CLAFLIN UNIVERSITY

Purpose:

Clafin University provides a student-centered, liberal arts education grounded in research, experiential learning, technology, community service, and life-long personal and professional fulfillment. Clafin is a diverse and inclusive community that works to cultivate practical wisdom, judgment, knowledge, skills and character needed for globally engaged citizenship and effective leadership.

Key moments from the previous year:

FEB 2024 - Clafin University received a \$1.8 million grant for its CU-DEEP Wellness Initiative which focuses on specific areas of health and wellness, often areas of concern in rural, minority communities. The CU-DEEP Wellness Initiative has four pillars of health and wellness: Dietary Health, Economic Health, Emotional Health, and Physical Health.

JAN 2024 - The Mellon Foundation awarded Clafin University \$1,489,000 to establish a Humanities Hub that will focus on place-based collaborations, embedding social justice content in the general education curriculum, and community-participatory research. Clafin's Humanities Hub will promote race/gender equity, environmental justice, and community well-being.

SEPT 2023 – With a No. 9 ranking this year, Clafin University is ranked a U.S. News & World Report Top 10 Best HBCU for the 13th consecutive year. Additionally, Clafin improved in the Top Performers on Social Mobility category as it moved up to No. 9 after being ranked at No. 20 in 2023.

AUG 2023 - Congressman James Clyburn (D-SC, 6th District) presented a check to Clafin University President Dr. Dwaun J. Warmack for \$17,417,000 from the U.S. Department of Commerce and the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) for an Innovation Center for Computer Science and Biotechnology. Clafin is the first HBCU to receive support from the NIST construction fund.

APRIL 2023 – Four Clafin University freshmen are now receiving an intimate look at the challenges, opportunities, and skills necessary to succeed in the hyper-competitive corporate environment as the University's inaugural class of BlueCross® BlueShield® of South Carolina Scholars

Objectives for the coming year:

RE-IMAGINING the UNIVERSITY'S GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS – given the speed of change in higher education, general education requirements of the past can be inadequate to meet the needs of future students. For this reason, faculty are taking a deep dive into curricular changes that will better prepare our students for future success.

CLAFLIN UNIVERSITY STUDENT CENTER – This year we will open a new 80,000-square-foot center for student life. The game-changing center will serve both students and the wider community and will include an 800-seat ballroom (the largest in the county), a 150-seat movie theater (the only one in the county), and a rooftop patio that accommodates 350 (the largest in Orangeburg).

CENTER FOR ELEVATION AND TRANSFORMATION – This new center, the Innovation Center for Computer Science and Biotechnology, aligns with Clafin's growing reputation as a premier liberal arts college/university and its widely heralded STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) agenda. The state-of-the-art teaching, learning, and research facility will increase the university's capacity for research in emerging bioscience areas, environmental science, and cybersecurity.

CLAFLIN UNIVERSITY CENTER FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE – First established in 2020, work to fully realize the promise of the Center for Social Justice this year focuses on 1) diversity and inclusion training, 2) police education training, 3) Pathways from Prison, 4) healthcare disparities, and interdisciplinary collaboration.

NEED-BASED SCHOLARSHIPS – With more than half of our students being first-generation students and nearly 75% eligible for Pell Grant support, building support for need-based scholarships continues to be a pressing need for the University.

Action(s) required from the 2024 Annual Conference: None.

If you take away nothing else from this report, know this:

Support from Claflin University is crucial to Claflin’s ability to sustain and build on its proud legacy of nurturing and cultivating future leaders for the ministry of the United Methodist Church. Furthermore, the University remains steadfast in its commitment to honor, promote, and support its affiliation with the United Methodist Church locally, nationally, and globally.

Narrative:

The blessings of this past year have been profound. From our growing nursing program – which now includes two master’s tracks -- to the new student center, new programs in downtown Orangeburg, and tremendous growth in the number of opportunities our students now enjoy to study abroad – preparing the next generation of young leaders remains a humbling and awesome responsibility. As a long-time sustaining partner with us in this work, the United Methodist Church sees, with greater fidelity than most, how a community of higher learning can become a community with a higher calling.

We continue in this work ever mindful that we are in the hands of Divine Love and Mercy, the beneficiary of care that surpasses all our understanding.

Respectfully submitted:

Dwaun J. Warmack, President
dwarmack@claflin.edu (803) 535-5412

Other ministry members:

Rev. Dr. Robin Dease ‘92, Bishop, North Georgia Episcopal Area, Claflin University Trustee

Rev. Larry McCutcheon, ‘72, Claflin University Interim Chaplin

COLUMBIA COLLEGE

Purpose:

The mission of Columbia College is to prepare every student personally and professionally for success through liberal arts and professional programs emphasizing service, social justice, and leadership development.

Key moments from the previous year:

Columbia College welcomed its 21st President, Dr. John Dozier, in July 2023. Continuing to build on momentum of recent years, the College also welcomed Dr. Sandra Rouse ‘95 as Vice President of Student Affairs and Dean of Students in February 2024.

Capital project improvements include the acquisition and renovation of College

Place Church, to be completed in Fall 2024. Two buildings that were beyond repair – Ariail-Peele and Daniel Hall - were demolished to become communal greenspaces for students. Partnering with the Columbia Fire Department, Daniel Hall was used as a training opportunity for their annual Search and Rescue Certification Program.

Student Affairs and Conference and Event Services presented TEDxColumbia College SC, a local, independently organized event curated by the Columbia College TEDx team. This event served as an opportunity for students, faculty, staff, alumni, and community members to share research and personal experiences relating to the significance of our society and a world that works to establish and maintain connection. Additionally, the Department of Athletics announced the addition of Men's Basketball to begin in Spring 2025.

The Institute for Building Resilience through Trauma-Informed Practices (TIP) began a community partnership with the Alston Wilkes Society, becoming the first community organization in SC to be certified as a TIP agency. The College also partnered with City Year to offer scholarships to City Year AmeriCorps members, alumni, and staff. Finally, the Columbia College Alternative Pathways to Teacher Certification Center continues to build on its success, certifying 90 teachers since 2018 with a teacher retention rate of 97%.

Objectives for the coming year:

We have begun a process for planning our College's growth and impact over the next three to five years. Our vision for Columbia College – called "On the Rise" – articulates how we will grow enrollment and net revenue through the impact we have on our students learning, growth, and success. We will complete the plan this year and begin its implementation. As stated above, we will also complete the renovation of College Place for occupancy in the fall while continuing to address the physical needs of a growing college community.

Action(s) required from the 2024 Annual Conference:

If you take away nothing from this report, know this:

At Columbia College our mission is "to prepare every student personally and professionally for success through liberal arts and professional programs emphasizing service, social justice, and leadership development."

We take pride in our roots as a Methodist-affiliated, liberal-arts college that offers every student an education that spans the arts, humanities, sciences, and social sciences while also preparing students for meaningful careers.

Our staff and faculty aim to cultivate well-rounded, critical, and compassionate people who are encouraged to explore fundamental questions of life, ethics, and human dignity, fostering a sense of responsibility for each other and the world around them. In summary, we change lives – this is more than a slogan or tagline, but an expression that deeply aligns with the outcomes we desire for our students, their families, and their communities. Not only are we committed to changing lives for the better, but to preparing our students to do the same.

Narrative:

"It's ok to do things scared."

This is the advice recent Columbia College graduate Mariah Williams wanted to leave with her fellow Columbia College students. Mariah shared that as an

international student, getting involved on campus was intimidating. However, because she felt empowered to try new things – even though she was scared – she found a home at CC. Mariah graduated from Lugoff-Elgin High School. Because of this positive experience, she chose to stay in South Carolina to complete her bachelor's in social work. After arriving at Columbia College, she discovered that living on campus would be an adjustment for her. She was tempted to retreat to her room, but before long, Mariah realized that she wanted to be more involved in campus life.

Even though she was scared, she started a work-study program in Tuition Accounts. Her position in Tuition Accounts led her to a position as Basketball Manager. Her position as Basketball Manager led her to the Columbia College Activities Board, and by her senior year, she served as president. Along the way, Mariah served as an Orientation Leader for first-year students and the Social Work Honors Society. Needless to say, Mariah fell right into place as a campus leader because she was willing to “do things scared.”

Mariah Williams graduated in the spring Class of 2023 and plans to start her Master of Social Work degree. As an institution, we hope to continue to empower students like Mariah to do things scared. The result is nothing short of inspirational.

Respectfully submitted:

John H Dozier, President
jdozier@columbiasc.edu, 803-786-3178

SPARTANBURG METHODIST COLLEGE

Purpose:

Spartanburg Methodist College is a private residential institution offering associate and baccalaureate degrees within the United Methodist Connection. At SMC, lives are transformed in a values-oriented, student-centered atmosphere in the Christian tradition that encourages academic excellence, intellectual exploration, social awareness, and character development within the liberal arts tradition.

Key moments from the previous year:

- SMC continues to develop and diversify our education offerings as we live into our identity as a 4-year college. Our faculty have developed and approved new Bachelor's degree offerings in Sports Management, Professional Writing and Digital Communications, and Psychology.
- SMC graduated our fourth class of Bachelor's Degree students in May.
- SMC debuted the “Pioneer Promise,” a program that guarantees that any student with a 4.0 GPA or higher in High School can attend SMC with no cost for tuition, fees, or books.
- SMC's athletic programs will be competing at the NAIA (National Association for Intercollegiate Athletics) starting in the fall of 2024, giving our student athletes the opportunity to enjoy the SMC experience for 4 years. Additionally, SMC is committed to growing the relationship between academics and athletics through a faculty liaison, Student Athlete Advisory Committee, and a Faculty booster club.
- SMC was Approved for Listing Without Qualification by the University Senate.

Objectives for the coming year:

- We continue to add to our course offerings and schedule with an eye towards accommodating our 3rd and 4th year students.

- SMC is committed to ensuring that our students have the best opportunity to persist through to graduation. As a result, SMC has adopted a single advisor program. Under this program, a student will have the same advisor from enrollment through employment.
- SMC has a Science building that is in dire need of updating. We have identified the renovation of this space as an institutional priority in the coming years.
- One area of focus will be to support and program for the new NAIA athletics activities on campus.

Action(s) required from the 2024 Annual Conference:

If you take away nothing from this report, know this:

Since 1911, SMC has provided education and opportunity to young people who might not otherwise be able to access it. SMC strives to fulfill this mission by making the college experience affordable, personal, and effective. Every person on this campus, from the staff to our faculty, to President Cochran, is committed to shepherding these young people in the direction of love, peace, and prosperity.

It is our belief that the ongoing work to move into offering a four-year option at SMC will enable us to better reach these students. Time and again, we have heard from graduating students that they wish they could remain at SMC in our familial, supportive atmosphere. Now we can offer them that opportunity to continue to grow in knowledge, citizenship, and faith while continuing to be nurtured by our committed, caring faculty and staff.

Narrative:

Starting your first job out of college is eye-opening for many graduates. Many are intimidated by the culture and pace of their new company. The Camak Core professional development program at Spartanburg Methodist College is designed to ease that transition and propel graduates to success.

Rodney Setzer '22 learned just how beneficial the Camak Core courses were when he started his job as a trade show coordinator for an electronics company. While he was skeptical of the value of the Camak Core while in school, he quickly noticed how often he leaned on those skills in his new job.

Rodney now shares that the Camak Core gave him essentially an internship during class hours. His professional development classes allowed him to build his professional expertise that led to him being successful in his new career. Rodney believes that his Camak Core classes were just as helpful to him as his Business classes.

Respectfully submitted:

Rev. Timothy Drum, Chaplain and Director of Church Relations
drumt@smcsc.edu, (Office) 864-587-4282 (Cell) 864-327-5794

WOFFORD COLLEGE

Purpose:

Wofford College provides a superior liberal arts education that prepares students to be leaders who think critically while possessing the knowledge and skills to turn thoughts into action to make positive contributions to the world around them.

Key moments from the previous year:

In 2023, Wofford celebrated the dedication of the Blackwell-Quattlebaum Center for Wellness and Counseling Services in the Hugh R. Black House after a \$3.5-million renovation.

In the fall, we welcomed the class of 2027 with 510 new students, which makes it the college's largest class ever. There were 4,186 applications.

Over the past three years, the college community has spent time revisiting its history. Recently, Dr. Dwain Pruitt (class of 1995), chief equity officer and vice president for community initiatives, has secured a grant to tell the college's history of desegregation, culminating in a publication that will be ready in time for the milestone's 60th anniversary in 2025.

We also mourned the loss of Jerry Richardson (class of 1959), who died March 1. His \$150 million gift in 2021 continues to inspire our community of learners to seek innovative ways to leverage the things we do well to support student success.

Objectives for the coming year:

Wofford will continue to look for innovative ways to create meaningful experiential learning opportunities for our students.

The Wofford College Wesley Fellowship, under the leadership of the Revs. Megan and Brad Gray (class of 2001), meets on campus weekly and offers a Sunday school class at Bethel United Methodist Church. The group has seen growth and has expanded its reach to include students from other campuses in Spartanburg.

Wofford College is appreciative of its ongoing relationship with Central United Methodist Church. Our Lifelong Learning program is currently housed there and involved 517 learners in 2023.

The college's Emerging Leaders Initiative (ELI), a vocational discernment program for those considering some aspect of lay or clergy ministry, continued this year. The program is led by the Rev. Dr. Ron Robinson, a 1978 Wofford graduate and the Perkins-Prothro Chaplain and Professor of Religion. Eight students received scholarship assistance as participants. Students are exploring ministry in areas ranging from environmental justice, gerontology, chaplaincy, counseling, medicine and social work.

Chaplain Robinson and Director of Career Services Curt McPhail (class of 1996) received a multi-year grant from NetVUE and the Lilly Foundation to establish a Vocation Across The Academy program. A dozen faculty and staff are part of a cohort that is reading books about the theological exploration of vocation. Each will present an action plan for integrating vocational exploration and discernment into their work with students.

Action(s) required from the 2024 Annual Conference:**If you take away nothing from this report, know this:**

During the 2023-24 academic year, Wofford distributed more than \$86.5 million in merit and need-based scholarships, federal and state aid, as well as outside scholarships and loans. A third of Wofford's budget goes toward scholarships and financial assistance, and more than 97% of Wofford students receive some form of financial aid. Specifically, the college's 132 United Methodist students (7% of the student body) shared more than \$5.4 million in financial assistance this year (100% of the South Carolina Annual Conference's contribution goes toward financial assistance for these deserving students).

Narrative:

Magic happens when you put those enthusiastic about teaching with those ready to learn. At Wofford, it's an everyday magic that has been a part of the college's culture since the first three faculty stood before the first seven students in 1854. It's a magic that now extends well beyond the walls of Main Building, where those first students lived, ate, took classes and met with professors.

While every student still takes classes in "Old Main," students now also spend time learning from the banks of Lawson's Fork Creek in Spartanburg and in the boardrooms and offices on Capitol Hill. They conduct research with faculty mentors on campus and complete internships abroad. They learn as they serve, lead, compete, perform, live in close quarters with others, and, yes, even when they make mistakes.

For the past decade, Prema and I have been on campus for all of it, and it has been our honor to serve this special place and the teachers and learners who, along with us, call Wofford home.

Nayef H. Samhat
President

Respectfully submitted:

Trevor Anderson, Director of Communications
andersontl@wofford.edu, 864-597-4538