

# FRONTIERS

SPARTANBURG METHODIST COLLEGE

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FALL 2019

**SMC WELCOMES  
THE FIRST  
BACHELOR'S  
DEGREE  
STUDENTS**



# FROM THE PRESIDENT:



September is a time when the annual calendar may be drawing to a close, but the SMC school year is just getting started. After the (relative) quiet of summer, seeing the excitement of our students as they arrive on campus always takes me back to my own freshman days.

It's especially gratifying to know that this year's freshman class is the first to experience SMC as a four-year institution. As they near the completion of their associate degrees (which we will continue to grant), this class and those that follow will no longer have the added stress of preparing to

leave a campus many of them have grown to love. For our faculty and staff, offering a bachelor's degree means they can finish the work they start with freshmen and sophomore students instead of hoping they'll receive the same support and attention somewhere else.

There's another history-making class on campus this year: our first junior class of students. In just two short years, they'll walk across the stage at graduation to receive the first bachelor's degrees awarded by SMC. And I believe that they'll leave us better equipped for success than any other students in the class of 2021. As you'll read in these pages, our faculty have created a unique four-year program that will prepare students to excel in the workplace — a cornerstone of Dr. David English Camak's hopes for the college he founded in 1911. In many ways, SMC has come full circle.

I hope you'll join us on campus or in the community for an upcoming event. And as always, we need the financial support of alumni and friends to continue the college's long history of evolving to serve the needs of our students. Please make an Annual Fund gift this year, or, if you give regularly to SMC, consider increasing your gift if at all possible.

I hope to see you soon.

Sincerely,

A stylized, handwritten signature in white ink that reads "Scott".

W. Scott Cochran  
President



## FRONTIERS

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METHODIST COLLEGE

Fall 2019

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# New FACULTY

This spring, SMC added nine new faculty members in response to a growing student body and the addition of the Bachelor's Degree program.

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**Crystal Brown, Professor of Economics**

Crystal Brown joins SMC's growing business department as a Professor of Economics. Bringing more than nine years of teaching experience to SMC, she has held positions at Lenoir-Rhyne University, Gardner-Webb University Brown, Regent University, University of South Carolina Upstate, Limestone College, Spartanburg Community College, and Montreat College. Brown received her Ph.D. in Organizational Leadership from Regent University, her Master of Business Administration from Winthrop University, her Master's Plus Marketing Certificate from Gardner-Webb University, and her Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from the University of South Carolina Upstate.



**Dawn Dingwell, Professor of Accounting and Business**

Dawn Dingwell joined SMC's business department as an adjunct Professor of Accounting in 2018 and will now teach full time. She has also taught accounting and business courses at Spartanburg Community College and RETS Technical Center in Centerville, Ohio. Dingwell received her MBA from the University of Cincinnati, her Bachelor of Arts in Financial Administration from Michigan State University, and she completed graduate accounting coursework at Gardner-Webb University.



**Kim R. Duckett, Professor of Biology**

Kim Duckett received her Ph.D. in Reproductive Physiology and Neuroendocrinology from Kent State University and her Bachelor of Science from the University of Akron. She also completed a postdoctoral fellowship at the Medical University of South Carolina and has more than 15 years of teaching experience. Most recently, she taught AP Biology, Honors Biology, and Human Physiology at Spartanburg Day School.



**Courtney D. Gordon, Professor of Biology**

Courtney Gordon has been hired as a full-time Professor of Biology after serving as an adjunct at the College for three years. Gordon has also been an adjunct Biology instructor at Spartanburg Community College. Gordon received her Master of Science in Plant Molecular and Cell Biology from the University of Florida, where she also spent four years as a research assistant. She received her Bachelor of Science in Biotechnology from Brigham Young University.



**Judy Mirick**, *Professor of Physics and Physical Science*

Judy Mirick received her Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction, her Master of Science in Physics, and her Bachelor of Science in Physics from Clemson University. Mirick brings over 20 years of teaching experience to SMC. Her most recent teaching position was as a science instructor at Marlborough School in Los Angeles, California.



**Stacy K. Parker**, *Director of the Criminal Justice Program and Professor of Criminal Justice*

Stacy Parker comes to SMC from Muskingum University in Ohio where she taught for 12 years. She received her Master of Science in Criminal Justice from the University of Cincinnati and received her Doctor of Jurisprudence and Bachelor of Science in Business Administration degrees from West Virginia University. Before her career in academia, Parker practiced law for nearly 10 years, serving as assistant prosecuting attorney for Kanawha and Jackson counties in West Virginia and Franklin County in Ohio. Her first position after graduating from law school was assistant attorney general for the West Virginia division of corrections.



**Kate Roark**, *Professor of Drama and Speech and Director of the SMC Theatre Program*

Kate Roark will be joining SMC's theatre department in a full-time role after being an adjunct professor since 2016. Roark has been teaching in the field for almost 20 years at various institutions including Converse College, Wofford College, Blackburn College, University of Houston-Downtown, and Illinois Wesleyan University. She received her Ph.D. in Theatre History and her Master of Arts in Theatre History from the University of Illinois of Urbana-Champaign and her Bachelor of Arts in Theatre Arts from Sewanee, the University of the South. Roark is a board member and the secretary for Proud Mary Theatre Company — a nonprofit theater dedicated to presenting LGBTQ+ voices and stories in Spartanburg and the upstate region.



**Lisa A. Unterseher**, *Professor of Religion*

Lisa Unterseher comes to SMC from Alaska Pacific University, where she was the Cardinal Newman Chair of Catholic Theology and Professor of Religious Studies at Alaska Pacific University. She was also the R. Wright Spears Chair and Professor of Religion at Columbia College for 18 years. Unterseher received her Ph.D. in Religious Studies, History of the Christian Tradition, and her Master of Divinity from Southern Methodist University. She has received her Bachelor of Arts in History and English from the University of Texas at Austin. In addition to her teaching career, Unterseher has also published a book on early Christian Studies, "The Mark of Cain and the Jews: Augustine's Theology of the Jews and Judaism," and written multiple scholarly articles and book reviews.



**Susan Wethington**, *Professor of Mathematics*

After serving in an adjunct role at SMC, Susan Wethington joins the SMC full time. Prior to becoming Professor of Mathematics, Wethington taught math at Spartanburg Community College for 10 years. She received a Master of Education in Mathematics from Converse College, a teaching certification in Middle School Math and Science from USC Upstate, and a B.S. in Computer Science from USC Spartanburg.



# FACULTY AWARDS

By Mary Hurston Zuelke



**Dr. Mary Jane Farmer,**  
*Professor of Psychology*

Dr. Mary Jane Farmer received the Virginia Staudt Sexton National Faculty Advisor award for her work with SMC's Psi Beta chapter. Psi Beta is a national psychology honor society. Farmer has been the chapter adviser at SMC since 2006 during which time the chapter has received eight chapter excellence awards.



**Ben Sloop,** *Professor of Mathematics*

Dr. Benjamin Sloop received the 2019 South Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities Excellence in Teaching Award. Nominated by his peers, Sloop exemplifies excellence in the classroom as well as dedication to his students outside of class, dedication to his role as an adviser to students, and dedication to his colleagues in assisting SMC during a time of significant change. The award includes a \$3,000 research grant.

**Kent Newberry,** *Executive Director of SMC Theatre Productions and Professor of Drama and Speech*

Prof. Kent Newberry received the Professor Emerita Award during SMC's graduation ceremony. The designation of Professor Emerita is not automatic upon retirement, rather it is a designation reserved for those who have served the College faithfully for no less than 15 years in a full-time capacity as well as demonstrated a high level of commitment to SMC and its mission. Prof. Newberry retired this spring after 41 years of service to SMC.



**Kris Neely,** *Professor of Art and Director of Interdisciplinary Studies, and Eunie Knouse, Professor of Biology and Chair of Science, Health, Math, and Computer Science Division*

During SMC's graduation ceremony, Prof. Kris Neely and Prof. Eunie Knouse were announced as the winners of the Archie Vernon and Margaret Wannamaker Huff faculty prize. The award is given annually to a faculty member who exemplifies outstanding professional qualifications, teaching ability, and service. The award is typically only given to one faculty member, but there was a tie this year between two deserving candidates. The award includes an \$800 stipend for further study, travel for professional purposes, or to defray the cost of publication expenses for scholarly work.

## SMC STUDENTS RECEIVE SCHOLARSHIPS FROM SC UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



L to R: Lindsay Jordahl, Brandley Hughes, Joseph Varner (not pictured, Allison Guidici)

In addition to funds contributed through the SC United Methodist Church's Board of Global Missions, four SMC students were awarded scholarships from the Global Board for the 2018-2019 academic year. Spartanburg Methodist College is grateful for the continued financial support from the SC United Methodist Church's Board of Global Missions.

**Lindsay Jordahl:** Associate in Arts  
Hometown: Rantoul, Illinois

**Brandley Hughes:** Associate in Business  
Hometown: Greenville, South Carolina

**Joseph Varner:** Associate in Business  
Hometown: Summerville, South Carolina

**Allison Guidici:** Associate in Arts  
Hometown: Greer, South Carolina

*“The moment I stepped on campus I knew this was where I wanted to be. SMC feels like home because of the close-knit atmosphere. It’s easy to get to know your classmates here.”*

— Lindsay Jordahl, class of 2020

## YANDLE TRUSTEE MEDAL WINNERS

The 2019 recipients of the Yandle Trustee Medal were Piper Adan-Bedley, Landon Wakefield, and Ashley Kenneally. The awards go to the student with the highest GPA in the graduating class. This year was a three-way tie, with all recipients earning a 4.00 GPA. Both Piper Adan-Bedley and Landon Wakefield will be continuing their education at SMC in the Bachelor of Arts program.



L to R: James Fletcher Thompson, Chair of the SMC Board of Trustees; Piper Adan-Bedley, Landon Wakefield, Ashley Kenneally





*SMC welcomed the largest freshman class in its history for its freshman student move-in day. 513 first-time college freshmen are taking classes at SMC this fall.*

# HERE WE GROW AGAIN

**FOR THE THIRD CONSECUTIVE YEAR,  
SMC WELCOMES THE LARGEST  
FRESHMAN CLASS IN COLLEGE HISTORY**

By Lisa Mincey Ware

As reports of declining college enrollments nationwide continue to dominate headlines, Spartanburg Methodist College is bucking the trend. For the third consecutive year, SMC's freshman class is the largest since the College's founding in 1911. The College also set a record for the largest total incoming class in its history and the largest total student body since 1990.



## A LOOK AT THE NUMBERS:

- **513 new freshmen started classes Wednesday, August 21 — the largest freshman class in the College's history.**
- **The new freshmen, plus readmitted students and transfer students, make up the largest incoming class in the College's history (551).**
- **45 junior students began classes in the College's new bachelor's degree program. They're the first juniors in the College's history.**
- **SMC's total student body is 910, the largest since 1990.**

In 2016, SMC's enrollment had decreased to 736 from an average of 800. In 2016, President Scott Cochran announced that the College would increase enrollment to 1,000 students by 2020. Driven by increased marketing, a revamped admissions process, and the addition of a bachelor's degree, enrollment has steadily risen each year. This fall's student body number is a 24% increase over the 2016 total.

"We have an incredible group of faculty and staff who have worked hard to provide new programs and to accommodate a larger student body in a very short period of time," said President Scott Cochran. "We've got over 170 additional students on campus since 2016, and we're going to continue to grow."

With enrollment totals clearing 900 again for the first time in 30 years, SMC is on track to meet the 2020 goal, said Ben Maxwell, Vice President for Enrollment. "It's gratifying to see that students are increasingly drawn to what we're offering at SMC, which is an affordable college education that they can now receive for all four years."

Junior student Jimmy Painter of Inman, South Carolina, says he is glad to be back on campus to complete a bachelor's degree. He is studying English and history, two of the four concentrations offered in SMC's Bachelor of Arts degree. "I transferred to another school in the spring, but I felt like a number there," he said. "At SMC, my professors know me and make sure I'm on track and OK. They care about me as a person."

Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students Teresa Ferguson says that 557 students, or 61% of the total student body, live in one of the College's seven residence halls. "We've had a few moments when we worried demand would exceed the supply, but we have been able to accommodate everyone again this year," she said. "We feel confident we can continue to meet the need for student housing even at the 1,000 student mark without building new housing, although we have contingency plans in place." ■

# Viva ACADEMIA!

By Mary Hurston Zuelke

To end the 2018-2019 academic year, students presented their yearlong research projects at Viva Academia — a mini-conference that showcases scholarly and creative works of SMC students and faculty. The event was spearheaded by Dr. Mary Jane Farmer, Professor of Psychology. In the spirit of the liberal arts, there was a wide range of topics covered from probability theory to art therapy. Students combined their course work with their research and presentation skills to share the practical applications of their research.

Brady Wakefield (B.A. class of 2021), whose research project was "Electronic Communication and Self-Disclosure," also presented his research from Viva Academia at the 15th Annual SC Upstate Research Symposium. The goal of the symposium is for colleges and universities in the Upstate to gather and share information about their research.



Brady Wakefield  
presenting at  
Viva Academia

SPRING BREAKS WELL SPENT:

# SMC STUDENTS HEAD TO SPAIN, NYC, AND FLORIDA

By Mary Hurston Zuelke

Three groups of SMC students and professors used their spring break to travel, learn, and serve others. One group went to Spain to explore the culture. One group went to NYC to learn from entrepreneurs and industry leaders. And another group went to Florida to help a homeowner rebuild her residences after Hurricane Irma.

## BIG BUSINESS IN THE BIG APPLE

The SMC Entrepreneurship Club (Trep Club for short) flew to NYC to visit industry leaders including IBM Watson, Foresters Financial, and Good Morning America. The goal of the trip was to give students an opportunity to network with big brands and pick company leaders' brains about what it takes to be successful in a competitive marketplace. Students raised funds for their travel through various businesses, including a bicycle sale during the holidays and weekly Chick-fil-a sandwiches sales on campus.



*Entrepreneurs Club on New York ferry headed to see the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island. L to R: (1st row) Rebecca Edmondson, Joseph Kemp, Camera Moore; (2nd row) Andrea Jerkovic, Sebastian Caro, Amanda Rosa, Hagan Goings; (3rd row) Dawson Peacock, Miriam Kemp, Brady Wakefield, Landon Wakefield; (4th row) Hemani Patel*



## REBUILDING WHAT IRMA DESTROYED IN FLORIDA

Eight SMC students and Chaplain Rev. Tim Drum packed their sunscreen, swimsuits, and handsaws and headed down to Florida to help a homeowner rebuild after Hurricane Irma. They were under the house installing insulation and up on the roof fixing leaks. Free transportation and housing was provided to the students by generous donors.



*SMC students in central Florida. L to R: Rodney Setzer, Molly Holder, Zachary Small, Autumn Breeden, Chaplain Tim Drum, Krysten Hamilton, Abigail Riddle, Danni Haywood, Alyssa Sprouse*

*SMC students in Spain enjoying dinner. L to R: Lindsay Taylor, Michelle Prokopp, Jesica Hamm, Bobby Nguyen, Michael Burriss, Jada Stancil, Grace McConnell, Savannah Daniels, Heatherly Edney, and Haley Mainville*



*Students enjoying the views at the Bay of Biscay in Spain. L to R: Michael Burriss, Professor of Spanish; Lindsay Taylor, Kelly Neil, Professor of English; Heatherly Edney, and Bobby Nguyen*



## CULINARY ADVENTURES IN SPAIN

Imagine dining on the finest meats and cheeses that Spain has to offer, trying the weirdest gastronomical delights of San Sebastian, and getting class credit for it. That's what a group of SMC students got to do during their spring break this year. Eight students and two professors traveled to Spain to study the rich culinary history the region has to offer. They maintained a food blog for course credit in journalism. The Paul Lofton fund and a grant from the Faculty Funds for Collaborative Projects helped offset travel costs for students. Salud!

# Summer INTERNSHIPS

By Rebecca Edmondson,  
SMC Marketing Intern  
and B.A. Class of 2021

**T**his summer, 21 SMC students completed a summer internship program lead by Victor Durrah, Director of Professional Development and Student Success. In addition to their internship responsibilities, students met weekly to hear from community and business leaders to learn about their personal career journeys.

"I am so proud of each of our students. They took time out of their summers to grow professionally. I was able to witness students develop their soft-skills, confidence, and overall knowledge of their chosen fields," says Durrah. "Everyone had a unique experience that left them with a better understanding of professional development. I can't wait to see what the future holds for our students. I see big things happening for each of them as they prepare for their lives after college."



*"This experience allowed me to get a better understanding of human resources in the corporate world. No day was the same, which I really enjoyed."*

—Kaylee Cash, Polydeck



*"My internship over the summer was a really eye-opening experience for me. It helped me realize it's the kind of work that I want to do."*

—Jennifer Paton, Safe Homes Crisis Coalition



*"During my healthcare internship, I see that everyone needs a little help. I can be the one to help out and put a smile on people's faces and make them feel loved."*

—Kaitlin Massey, Happy Home Care/  
Spartanburg Regional Healthcare



*"I had an interview with New York Life Insurance, and SMC helped me feel prepared by teaching me how to answer questions, what questions to ask, and how to research the company."*

—Matthew Palmer, New York Life Insurance





*"I really enjoyed getting to meet local business owners and see how each of them operates their own business."*

—Noah Moore, Cornbread Consulting Firm



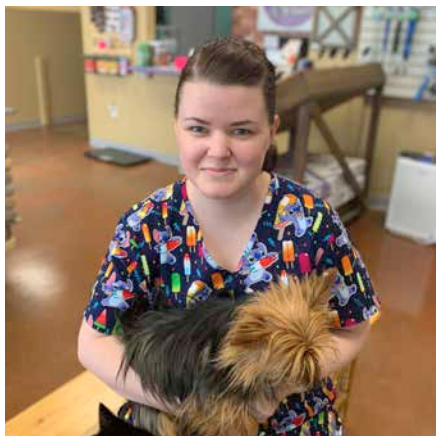
*"What I like most about my marketing internship is the constant growth I've had in an area I knew nothing about. SMC and Polydeck have continuously worked to find the best fit for me, which has allowed me to strengthen myself professionally and further my goals."*

—Jesica Hamm, Polydeck



*"I really enjoyed connecting with other people and coming up with creative ideas. One of my projects was to explore different ways to advertise the student clubs on campus."*

—Rebecca Edmondson, SMC Marketing Department



*"I enjoyed the experience of working with such caring individuals and also observing the ins and outs of running a business."*

—Morgan Haynes, 4Paws



*"At the end of my freshman year, I heard about the summer internship program. I worked with Courtney Shelton and Victor Durrah to create my resume and find a position in nursing. SMC has prepared me for my career after school, and I'm getting a head start on how to help, love, care, and meet my client's needs. My internship this summer helped me become who I want to be."*

—Lili Taylor, Happy Home Care/  
Spartanburg Regional Healthcare



*"My favorite part of the summer internship program was definitely attending the Black Excellence Gala. I had the opportunity to see some of our biggest community activists and small business owners be recognized for their hard work and dedication. I felt truly humbled being in the presence of so many amazing people."*

—Rian Morelan, B.A.R.S. Academy



*"My favorite experience was being able to gain knowledge from professionals who are in the field that I want to be in."*

—Jada Johnson, Smithalee Photography

*"Everyone had a unique experience that left them with a better understanding of professional development. I can't wait to see what the future holds for our students."*

—Victor Durrah



**BOARD  
MEMBER  
SPOTLIGHT  
PAT  
HENRY**

By Baker Maultsby

**M**ost high schools these days have robust counseling programs to help their students decide on a college that's best suited to their interests and qualifications. There was little of that kind of support at Conway High School when Spartanburg Methodist College Board Member Pat Henry was a senior there in 1962.

"We didn't have guidance counselors," he recalled. "However, we had a teacher who kept brochures for the various colleges. I was in her class one day, and she handed me a brochure for what was then Spartanburg Junior College. Little did I know that that little brochure would change the course of my life."

With encouragement from his mother, Henry enrolled at the College. It would be the launching pad for a meaningful and successful life.

He says he wasn't much of a student in high school. But at SJC, he said, "I made two lifelong friends, Mike Clayton and Robert Roberts, who did something I did little of in high school — they studied. I decided I would try it and found out what my mother had tried her best to drill into my hard head: 'If you study you will make good grades.'"

Meanwhile, professors at the College "knew each student by name and encouraged studying and were always there and available to help." Henry was also exposed to the field of law while at SJC. He credits an early morning Business Law class with spurring his initial interest in a career as an attorney.

With newfound confidence and seriousness about his academic direction, Henry would go on to Wofford College and then the University of South Carolina Law School, where he was a member of the national legal honor society, the Wig and Robe, and served as research editor of the South Carolina Law Review.



"I credit SJC with instilling in me the will to do my best," he said.

Along the way, another major life event occurred — also made possible by his time at SJC — Henry married his wife, Marvis. They'd met as students at the College.

Henry and Marvis settled back in his hometown of Conway, and he established a long and rewarding career in law. He was a leader in his field, serving as president of the Horry County Bar Association and the South Carolina Commission on Lawyer Conduct, before retiring in 2017.

Henry has enjoyed the opportunity to give back to Spartanburg Methodist College. It's his second stint on the Board. He began a 12-year term after being approached by then-president Charles Teague.

He is currently the Chair of the Academic Affairs Committee and Board Vice Chair. Henry has also served on the Board's Planning and Development committee — a role that has given SMC Vice President for Institutional Advancement Jennifer Dillinger the opportunity to work closely with Henry. She admires his giving spirit as well as his experience and judgment.

"My team and I always appreciate his attendance and thoughtful support," Dillinger said. "I truly enjoy working with him, and I value his questions and ideas."

She believes Henry's fellow Board members value his insights as well.

"The other Board members deeply respect his opinion," Dillinger said. "During the Board's consideration of a bachelor's degree, Pat kept the group focused on making the best decision for our students, faculty, and staff. He sought to ensure that the life-changing educational experience he enjoyed would be available to other young people for decades to come."

Dillinger described both Pat and Marvis as the kind of alumni who consistently demonstrate their dedication to the College, both through gifts and personal involvement.

She said, "Pat and Marvis Henry are incredibly special people, evidenced by their continued support for SMC, both as donors and leaders. They attend as many alumni and College events as possible, even driving up from Conway for short visits, clearly demonstrating their continued appreciation, love, and support for the College."

Indeed, it is something of a love affair for Henry. "It has been one of the highlights of my life to serve on the SMC Board," he said.

Henry, who previously served on the Coker College Board of Trustees, is impressed by the leadership of President Scott Cochran and believes that the plans underway to expand the College's impact with four-year programs will result in "great things ahead for SMC." He added, "I am honored to be a part of it."

Though he's excited about SMC's future and the innovations the College has embraced, Henry remains grateful for values that have remained true at SMC.

"I enjoy serving on the Board because I believe in the mission of the College and the fact that the entire staff of the College puts the guidance of the hearts and minds of the students as first priority," he said.

He knows firsthand what a difference that makes. "My time as a student as SJC formed a large part of the person I became," he said. "It was the best two years of my life." ■

*"I enjoy serving on the Board because I believe in the mission of the College and the fact that the entire staff of the College puts the guidance of the hearts and minds of the students as first priority."*

— Pat Henry



*Bachelor's Degree program students pause for a group photo during Orientation.*

# SMC WELCOMES THE FIRST BACHELOR'S DEGREE STUDENTS

By Lisa Mincey Ware



**A**fter two years of record-breaking freshman enrollment levels, this year's summer orientation for new students included another milestone class: The first bachelor's degree students in SMC's history were officially welcomed to campus during a special orientation session on August 20.

"You're a historic group," said Dr. Jonathan Keisler, Chair of the BA Program and Professor of Business, as he kicked off the session. "I'm happy to celebrate with you today."

All of the 45 new junior class members are former SMC students, either rising sophomores or students who returned to SMC after a short time at a different four-year institution. The College's goal was to keep this first class small to manage growth responsibly, says Dr. Mark Gibbs, SMC's Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs. "We're incredibly excited to have juniors on campus," he says. "We feel confident about the excellent academic experience we can provide to them and in our plan to continue adding additional students as we grow to our goal of 1,000 by 2020, which we are on track to do."

For a group of students already familiar with the College, junior Orientation was more about marking the historic nature of the class and taking care of a few details. Students were introduced to the faculty coordinators for each of the four bachelor's degree concentration areas (business, English, history, and religion) and the Camak Core (the career development component of the degree). They also met the Pioneer Advising Center team, the College's new group of professional academic coaches, and learned how the team would be available to assist them.

"You've got a 100-plus people pulling for you," said President Cochran during his remarks to the group. "We are here to help you become the absolute best you can be."

Jimmy Painter of Gaffney Inman, South Carolina, says the support he got at SMC during his first two years drew him back to complete a bachelor's degree — even

though he initially enrolled at a different school. "Four days ago, I made the decision to come back to SMC," he explains. "I transferred to another [Spartanburg] college, and I just felt like a number to them, not a person. Here, everyone makes sure I'm on the right path and that I'm okay and where I need to be." He plans to study English and religion for his two B.A. degree concentrations, and to take advantage of the Camak Core to discover the best career path.

"I want to get plugged into all of the different internship opportunities, try a number of things and see what I like," Painter said. "But I'm also looking forward to studying religion because I'm a Christian, and I think it's important to understand your own faith and its history."

Keajha Sullivan of Spartanburg also returned to SMC to complete her bachelor's degree after being disappointed by the experience at another four-year school. Like many Generation Z students (those born between the mid-1990s and early 2000s), Sullivan wants to be an entrepreneur. "I'm planning to study business and history, and I want to learn the skills I need to launch my own cosmetics line," she said.

"The Camak Core will help me understand how to manage and grow a business that serves a diverse customer base."

As part of their special Orientation, the students were presented with an SMC-branded portfolio as a symbol of the strong career preparation component of their degree. The Camak Core, SMC's signature career development program named for the college's founder, is required for all bachelor's degree-seeking students.

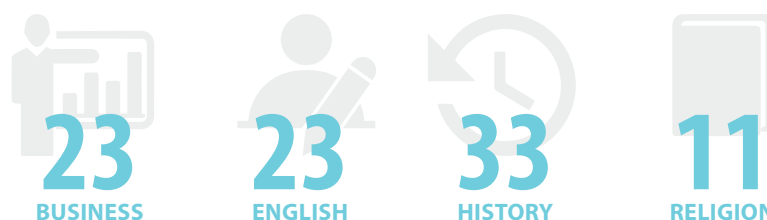
"We know employers are looking for students who not only think critically, problem-solve and communicate well — just a few of the skills students learn in liberal arts colleges like SMC," says Courtney Shelton, Vice President for Design and the Camak Core Coordinator, "but they also want soft skills, and the Camak Core is designed to teach those so that our students will have an edge when they graduate."

If all goes as intended, these students will make history again in spring 2021 when they receive their diplomas and graduate as the first bachelor's degree class. Until that time, they plan to enjoy their status as upperclassmen as much as possible. ■

## SMC'S BACHELOR'S DEGREE AT-A-GLANCE



## NUMBER OF STUDENTS BY CONCENTRATIONS\*



\*All students are enrolled in two concentrations.



# WHAT IS THE CAMAK CORE

## AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Five Burning Questions  
with Courtney Shelton

By Lisa Mincey Ware

**S**MC's Camak Core is an innovative career preparation program at the heart of SMC's new Bachelor's Degree. We asked Courtney Shelton, Vice President for Professional Development and Design and Coordinator of the Camak Core, to answer five burning questions about the new program.

### **Q1:** Let's start with the basics. What is the Camak Core?

**Courtney:** "The Camak Core is a group of six classes that give students skills they need to succeed in the workplace. It's named in honor of SMC's founder, Dr. David English Camak. SMC's bachelor's degree requires students to choose two concentrations instead of majors. They can choose two from business, English, history, or religion. The Camak core is their third required concentration, and all B.A. degree students will take Camak Core courses, which start in their junior year."

### **Q2:** What kind of skills will they learn?

**Courtney:** "I made a list of them for the sidebar of this article — check them out! These are the skills employers have noted, in national surveys and in conversations with us, that most college students don't have but need in order to be job ready. The skills aren't specific to any particular major, field, or career, and they're collectively known as soft skills."

### **Q3:** Won't students learn the soft skills they need on the job?

**Courtney:** "Sure, they can learn soft skills on the job, but it can take much longer and be much harder. The reason is because soft skills are often attitude- and behavior-based. If a soft skill doesn't come naturally to a student, it can take a lot of practice and reinforcement to master it. But if SMC students can show an employer they've already mastered those skills, employers know they'll contribute to the organization faster and at a higher level than most recent college grads — and that makes our students much more competitive for the best careers at the best starting pay."

"We're trying to help our students understand that just getting the degree doesn't guarantee success, even though it was probably enough for their parents or grandparents. Workplace expectations are incredibly different these days, and we want them to learn the difference between college skills and workplace skills before they graduate and start their first jobs."



## Q4: So, what's the difference between college skills and workplace skills?

**Courtney:** "I'm glad you asked! Surveys tell us that employers want to hire graduates with the soft skills we're teaching in the Camak Core, but most colleges still focus on teaching academic skills only. And that was fine for the last 500 years, but we know that most students go to college today because they need a degree to pursue a career. But for most of their lives, students are taught that good grades equal success. And of course, earning great grades is an accomplishment that should be valued and celebrated. What's not working so well anymore is that after college, plenty of successful students struggle to find a great job or don't earn promotions because maybe they can't work well in a team. Or maybe they can't accept criticism, or they can't solve a problem without their supervisor telling them every step to take. Suddenly, these successful students aren't successful employees and so, understandably, they feel like their college took their money without preparing them."

## Q5: Why is the Camak Core a requirement of SMC's bachelor's degree?

**Courtney:** "As a College, SMC decided soft skills were so valuable for our students that it would be irresponsible of us, as educators, not to teach them. Most schools offer some form of career preparation, but it's nearly always optional. We're requiring it, and no other liberal arts college is requiring it at the level we are, because we believe teaching soft skills along with academic skills will guarantee our students are as prepared as possible to be successful in their first job and in every other job after graduation. Also, college is, in many ways, the best place to practice these skills. If you're going to make mistakes that could keep you from getting a great job or that will set you back in your career, we want our students to make those mistakes on a Camak Core project so they can learn from them before it has real-world consequences." ■

## CAMAK CORE FOR-CREDIT COURSES OFFER MORE CAREER PREPARATION CLASSES THAN ANY OTHER LIBERAL ARTS DEGREE PROGRAM.

*What will students actually learn in the Camak Core and how will their classes give them real-world skills and experiences? Here's a list of courses and the soft skills students will have the opportunity to learn.*

### CAMAK CORE CLASS

#### Community Discovery and Engagement (or, How to Identify and Solve Problems)

Employers want to hire people who don't just sit back and wait for their next instruction. In this class, students practice taking initiative and developing projects to solve a community problem.

**SKILLS TAUGHT:** Project Management, Research & Context, Teamwork, Solution Generation & Creative Problem-Solving, Proposal Development, Public Speaking & Presentation, Civic Engagement, Data Analysis and Strategy.

#### Professional Development and Leadership (or, How to be a Good Teammate)

Leadership is not a title or a position; it's a set of behaviors and attitudes anyone can develop. In this class, students learn more than leadership theory: They'll get practical leadership coaching to help them become stronger leaders and team members.

**SKILLS TAUGHT:** Managing a Team, Ethics & Values-Based Leadership, Personal Evaluation & Strength Development, Conflict Management, Giving & Receiving Feedback, Global Issue Awareness, Personal Finance, and Creating & Clarifying Vision.

#### Professional Communications (or, Internship Preparation)

Students learn the basics of career preparation, which is founded upon developing strong written and oral communication skills.

**SKILLS TAUGHT:** Networking, Negotiation, Resume & Cover Letter Writing, Interview Skills, LinkedIn, Internship & Job Search Strategy, Work Place Culture & Communication, and Social Media.

#### Applied Technology (or, The Tools of Your Trade)

Every career uses technology, and students need to know the tools of their trade. Students will explore and learn more about the programs, applications, and processes necessary for career interests.

**SAMPLE TECHNOLOGIES EXPLORED (varies by student):** Adobe Photoshop, Advanced Microsoft Excel, Coding/ Programming, Web Development, Video Editing, Data Analytics, and Social Media Management.

#### Internship (or, Real World Experience)

The best preparation for a career is to actually experience what it's like to work in it — only then can students really understand the daily responsibilities, challenges, and rewards of a given profession. By completing an internship (one in-depth experience or three less-intensive experiences), they'll gain actual work experience and a stronger understanding of what they want to do — or don't want to do — after graduating.

#### Capstone Project (or, Putting it All Together)

Students will take the skills learned in their Camak Core course and use them to bring their community engagement project (from the Community Engagement and Discovery Course) to life. They will start a small-business or nonprofit organization or make other ideas a reality. The course will culminate in a presentation of their work.

**SKILLS TAUGHT:** Project Implementation & Management, Research & Context, Solution Generation & Creative Problem-Solving, Writing Skills, Public Speaking & Presentation, Data Analysis and Strategy.



*Katie Babb (foreground) and Amber Knight during their van tour of the Una, Saxon, and Arcadia neighborhoods.*

# BUILDING CAREER SKILLS IN THE COMMUNITY

## CAMAK CORE STUDENTS LEARN TO SOLVE PROBLEMS IN DISTRESSED NEIGHBORHOODS

By Lisa Mincey Ware

**"First thing you need to know: this is not a poverty tour," said Dr. Jonathan Keisler, Professor of Business and Chair of the BA Program. He was behind the wheel of a parked and swelteringly hot passenger van, his body turned to face the students sitting in rows of seats behind him. "This is not about looking down on people. This is about identifying the cause of a problem and finding ways to fix it."**

Keisler, along with 15 bachelor's degree students from his Community Discovery and Engagement classes (part of the College's Camak Core; see story on page 16), were setting off on a hot August afternoon for a 30-minute drive through the Una, Saxon, and Arcadia neighborhoods north and west of SMC's campus. It's the first of four back-to-back round trips for Keisler, who will take 15 students

at a time. "We planned to use a bus so we could all go together, but some of those streets are so narrow that it wasn't going to be able to turn around in a few places," he explains. "And we really wanted the students to see the entire community."

Named for the textile mills that employed neighborhood residents for most of the 20th century, the Una, Saxon, and Arcadia areas were once home to churches, schools, restaurants, and grocery stores. When the South Carolina textile industry began to falter in the 1970s, the neighborhoods declined as residents left to find work elsewhere. When their customers left, stores and businesses closed or moved to more prosperous areas. The textile industry never recovered, and today, Una, Saxon, and Arcadia are communities in distress.



The first step to a good solution is to make sure you understand the problem, Keisler says. "When we see a neighborhood that is struggling, it's human nature to make assumptions about what happened there," he says. "But assumptions may not lead to good solutions that address the real issues. When we have so many distractions at our fingertips these days, paying attention, listening and observing are skills that have become more valuable than ever."

The van tour, says Keisler, is the first step in teaching students how to take the fundamental skills they're learning in their academic courses (such as critical thinking, researching, and analyzing information) and use them to solve problems in the real world. "There are opportunities in the Una, Saxon, and Arcadia communities to develop new businesses and nonprofits that could serve the residents and help revitalize the area," Keisler says. "By coaching our students through the process of starting those organizations in a project-based course like Community Discovery and Engagement, they'll learn to be the kind of self-directed, investigative problem-solvers any employer wants on their team, no matter what type of career the students choose."

Community Discovery and Engagement is one of the first Camak Core courses students take as part of the bachelor's degree. By the end of the class, they'll present detailed plans, complete with

timelines and budgets, for neighborhood projects that will be carried out during the remaining two years of their bachelor's degrees. As they work on their projects, each of the six Camak Core classes will teach them the skills needed to make their projects successful.

Driving slowly down weed-choked streets bordered by decaying wooden cottages, Keisler encourages the students to look beyond the disrepair to notice what's missing from the landscape. "Where do the people who live here get their food?" he asks. "There aren't any stores," a student volunteers. "That's right," Keisler returns, glancing into the rearview mirror. "And if you don't have a car, how do you get groceries if your only option is to walk a few miles?"

"It's pretty hot," another student says. "I wouldn't want to be walking and carrying a bunch of bags right now."

On this trip, the students learn to "see" the neighborhoods. The van passes blight, but also many bright spots, including churches and a community center. "Allies," Keisler says, as they drive past. "Note the churches; they'll be a good resource for you."

At the end of September, the students will visit again. In between the bookend drives, they'll learn about the history of the neighborhoods, talk with residents, and hear from representatives of county

and community organizations who can provide insight into the issues associated with daily life in impoverished areas. Keisler expects the second drive to be a different experience from the first.

"After doing some research, including readings and talking to the people who are the experts on these communities, we'll take them back again," he explains. "If it goes the way we think it will, the students should see a very different landscape that's full of possibilities and not just hopelessness."

"The work students do in between visits to the communities will give them the context they need to develop neighborhood solutions," says Courtney Shelton, Vice President for Professional Development and Design and the Camak Core Coordinator. "More importantly, we're modeling for them how they tackle a business problem."

Later that day, Alyssa Hill, a junior from Gaffney, South Carolina, concentrating in business and English, reflected on the tour. "What really drew my attention was the community center," she says. "I noticed they offered dance classes at the center; they're making an effort for the kids." Pausing for a moment, it's clear she's considering what she saw. "I was president of my drama club in high school," she continues. "Maybe it would help to do plays, too, with costumes and sets."

It's too early for Alyssa to know if a children's theater will become her Camak Core project, or even for her to really understand how the work she'll do over the next two years will translate into career success. But a 30-minute tour was all it took to get a good idea started.

"I've driven past that neighborhood, but I never really paid attention to it," Alyssa says. "The tour really helped make it real for me." ■

*Dr. Kathy Cann, SMC Professor of History (retired) and Professor Emerita, speaks to Camak Core students about the history of the Una, Saxon, and Arcadia communities.*







# LEADERS OF THE PAC

THE PIONEER ADVISING CENTER TEAM EASES THE COLLEGE TRANSITION



By Baker Maultsby

**F**or Kathleen Crozier, “seeing young people set goals and accomplish them is very rewarding.”

That’s why she enjoys her work as a staff member with the Pioneer Advising Center, or PAC, which began advising students in the spring of 2019. The four-person team, under the direction of Associate Provost for Academic Programs Kathleen Brown, works to make the advising process a learning opportunity while encouraging students to take ownership of their educational decision-making.

Meanwhile, the PAC’s advising model calls for faculty members to play a key role in mentoring students as they set goals and make plans.

The idea, says Brown, is “to help students with their critical thinking skills while they make the transition from the high school mindset to the college culture. It can be quite a shift in thinking for many students.”

There is plentiful research indicating that academic advising programs can be critical to college retention rates and to students’ overall level of accomplishment. To be successful, students must know how to navigate college, and that’s what makes the PAC so important at SMC.

Brown says the concept for the PAC grew out of SMC’s reaccreditation process with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges. The organization requires colleges to create a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) during the reaccreditation process that takes place each 10 years. Following a process that included town hall meetings, surveys, and brainstorming sessions, SMC chose academic advising as its QEP.

The advising program is now an integral part of the student experience at SMC. “All new students are assigned a PAC Adviser,” Brown explains. “The

PAC Adviser meets with the student before classes begin to discuss his or her interests and goals. Together, they choose the degree the student will pursue at SMC. The PAC Adviser explains the course requirements for the degree and assists the student in planning out a path to complete the degree.”

In students’ second semester, they begin to work with a faculty mentor in their chosen field. The professor will provide insight on academic and career opportunities in their field and help students with setting goals and selecting courses to help them meet their goals.

Both PAC advisers and professors enjoy the program, Brown says. “It’s gratifying to work with students one-on-one, instructing them on how college degrees work and what the requirements are to be successful.”

Crozier adds, “I love that from the first time we meet with students, they know that we are there to help them throughout their college career. Academic advisers always have the students’ best interest in mind, and students know they can come to us and find the help they need.”

While the program emphasizes discussion and collaboration between students, PAC advisers, and professors, logistical support is also provided. Advisers keep track of students’ records and help them with the ins and outs of registering for classes. They also assist students in hammering out a course schedule that’s free of conflicts — an important service for those who play on sports teams or who work part time.

Still, says Crozier, the PAC model is centered on building strong connections. “As relationships are formed, students know they can come to us with any issue and we will find a solution for them.” ■



# COMING HOME:

## VICTOR DURRAH '03 LEADS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND STUDENT SUCCESS

By Baker Maultsby



**V**ictor Durrah has a pretty straightforward philosophy about the meaning of a college education: “Preparing students for the real world through real-life experiences and relationships.”

To that, he adds, “I’m here for it!”

Indeed, he is.

Being a first-generation college student-athlete, Durrah played basketball at Spartanburg Methodist College. He returned to SMC in the spring of 2019 as the Director of Professional Development and Student Success. It’s a role that connects him back to his time as a student at the College.

He says, “As a student, it was very important that I was able to experience a small, family-oriented college culture. I was able to cultivate relationships with professors and advisers that kept me accountable for my actions on and off the court. I felt like I mattered and I wasn’t just another student.”

It’s those relationships and experiences that Durrah understands to be so important. SMC gave him the opportunity to participate in guided community service work that sparked a passion that has followed him ever since.

After finishing SMC in 2003, he attended USC-Upstate and majored in nonprofit

administration and management. The program involved additional community service and engagement, and Durrah became focused on youth development. He worked with the Boys and Girls Clubs of the Upstate, getting active, practical experience working with young people that complemented his coursework.

While still in college, he founded Brothers Restoring Urban Hope, Inc. (BRUH) — a nonprofit mentoring organization aimed at empowering youth and young adults.

“It’s guided by the principle that all students — regardless of socioeconomic status, family dynamics, nationality, or past failures — deserve a chance at a bright future,” said Durrah, who has been recognized for his work as recipient of the Spartanburg County Foundation’s Mary L. Thomas Award for Civic Leadership and Community Change.

That’s the spirit he brings to his new role at SMC. “The work we do with Brothers Restoring Urban Hope Inc. aligns very well with my work here at SMC. The ultimate goal is to prepare students for life after college. Whether I am on campus or in the community, the same objectives apply — to help students be successful in life and to become leaders with high character and a sense of who they are and where they are going.”

Durrah leads a wide range of programs to support students as they prepare for career and life goals. Services include career interest assessment tests, online career research support, and professional internships.

It’s all under the umbrella of Professional Development at SMC. It is a program that, as Durrah says, “Develops skills and habits valued by employers in any field while giving students hands-on experiences in specific areas they want to pursue.”

“This is a model for success in terms of what employers are looking for,” he said. “Our work will not only prepare students to get jobs, but we will prepare them to keep jobs and grow in their chosen fields.”

Durrah, who grew up in nearby Cowpens, has loved being back at SMC. Noting that he has stayed in touch with former teammates, coaches, and professors over the years, Durrah says “SMC has always felt like a second home.”

Durrah says he knew that as a proud alum he would always maintain ties to the Spartanburg Methodist community. But the reality of making SMC his workplace and of working on behalf of students at the College is “a surreal feeling,” he said.

With a slight chuckle, he added, “As I walk around campus, I still think to myself, ‘God is always up to something.’ ■

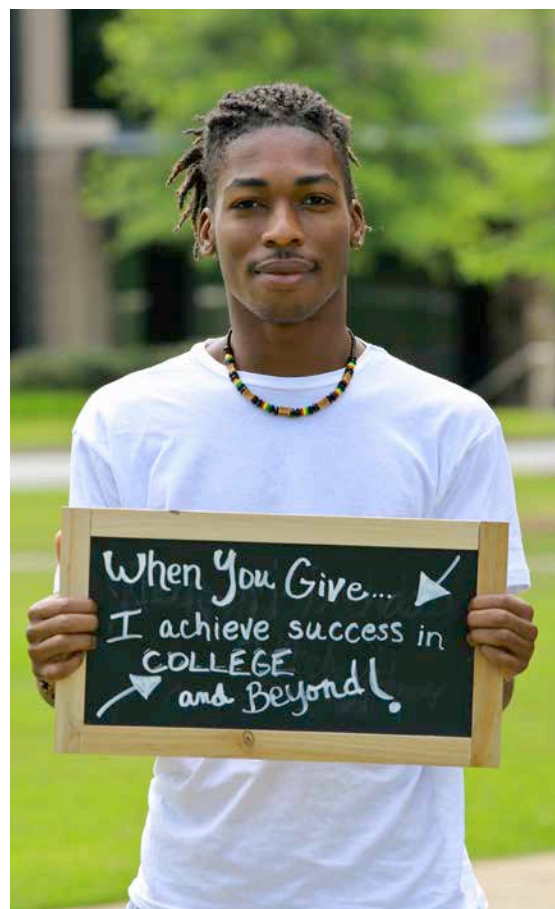


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**DONOR SPOTLIGHT**

# **EVELYN AND SCOTT MIDDLETON**

**SEE SMC AS A PILLAR  
OF OPPORTUNITY  
FOR THE LOCAL COMMUNITY**

By Miranda Kozman



**When you ask Evelyn Middleton why she invests so much in Spartanburg Methodist College, you can immediately hear excitement bubble in her voice. For her, supporting SMC is a point of deep personal pride.**

"I wish I could put into words how wonderful SMC is," she remarks. "Spartanburg helps students get a college education who wouldn't otherwise be able to, and that's incredible. Getting a college education changes students' lives and it changes their families' lives, too. I've seen it over and over again."

For more than a decade, Reverend Evelyn Middleton and her husband, Reverend Scott Middleton, have made major contributions to SMC because they believe wholeheartedly in its mission and the opportunities it provides to the community. They have contributed to several key building and improvement projects, including the Ballard Center, the SMC Studio, and the renovation of Judd Hall. Their support has been instrumental in helping the College update and innovate its facilities to better serve students.

Their support for Spartanburg goes beyond their financial contributions. Scott has worked with young entrepreneurs at SMC and Evelyn is a long-standing member of the Board of Trustees. Through her work as a Board member, Evelyn has seen that the College is skillfully guided by a group of Trustees with diverse

perspectives and backgrounds. "Every time I go to the Board meetings, I'm always learning," she notes. "Everyone on the Board is a welcome voice. So we get to see every issue from a number of different perspectives and then put them all together to make the best decisions."

In addition to the Board of Trustees, Evelyn also sees expert leadership from the College's president, Scott Cochran. "Scott makes sure that Board members get the opportunity to meet students and instructors and hear from them about what's happening at the school. That's so important. Scott is involved in the students' lives. He knows about them and cares about them, and I think that really makes a difference in the effectiveness of SMC."

As ministers in Methodist churches, Evelyn and Scott are naturally supportive of Methodist schools in the area. However, the couple's connection to SMC is personal and stretches back to Scott Middleton's own education when he attended SMC as a freshman. He has never forgotten the opportunities the College opened up for him, and now he supports the College so that others in the community can have the same kinds of opportunities. Scott has seen firsthand how a personalized and supportive educational environment can transform a student's life. "My high school teachers did not believe I would be successful in college. It was undiagnosed at the time, but I later found out I was dyslexic and had ADHD. SMC allowed me

to have small classes and direct contact with professors who helped me to learn. Without that, I would not have been able to continue my education and I wouldn't have been successful in business."

In addition to the learning environment, Scott is also impressed with the well-rounded experience that SMC provides for its students. "SMC works hard to give every student a chance to be successful in the classroom as well as in social interactions. Through extracurricular activities, every student has the opportunity to gain experience in practical life situations and develop their leadership skills," he notes.

Evelyn and Scott Middleton have seen SMC change the trajectory of students' lives, but Evelyn is especially thrilled to see the College's expanded community outreach initiatives to bring in a larger and more diverse student body. She is supportive of SMC's recent move to begin offering four-year degrees in addition to two-year degrees. "So many students say their only criticism of SMC is that they have to go somewhere else to get their B.A. So I think this change will bring in a lot more students and their opportunities at SMC will expand."

Evelyn knows that SMC's work is far from over, and she feels the College has more to offer the community in the future. "There are a lot of projects in the works right now. We've been discussing a number of possibilities, and I'm excited about where we're headed." ■

*"Spartanburg helps students get a college education who wouldn't otherwise be able to, and that's incredible."*

— Evelyn Middleton

## SPEAKER USES STORYTELLING TO HEAL TRAUMA

By Elva Ramirez

**S**MC welcomed a special guest lecture series by nationally sought-after speaker Rev. Romal Tune in the spring of 2019.

Rev. Tune is the author of *Love Is an Inside Job* and *God's Graffiti*. A popular public speaker who often deals with the issues of self-love and trauma, Rev. Tune uses storytelling techniques to identify toxic narratives and guide people on reaching life-affirming changes. "Everything begins and ends with the stories you are accepting as true about who and what you can become," Rev. Tune says.

Rev. Tune grew up poor in the California Bay Area but managed to get off the streets and enlist in the army. Eventually, he earned a Master of Divinity degree



from Duke University. Rev. Tune soon embarked on a popular speaking career, evangelizing on the power of combining therapy with faith in God. Rev. Tune's six-word mission, "I help hurting people find healing," forms the basis of his teachings.

"Dedicated to helping individuals, nonprofits, and companies recover from setbacks and honor their stories, Rev. Tune's message of love and self-acceptance could not be more timely," says Rev. Tim Drum, SMC chaplain. ■

## THE UNITED METHODIST WOMEN'S MISSION U

held their annual conference at SMC in July. Methodist women from across South Carolina came to worship and learn on campus.



A volunteer for Killingsworth, a home to help women get back on their feet after hardships, sharing information about the organization.



Conference attendees collecting stamps and can tabs to raise funds to build wells in developing countries.



# SPORTS RESULTS



## CROSS COUNTRY

Ken Roach took the men and women's team to the Region X meet where both teams finished runner-up. They had three All-Region selections on the team — Logan Easterlin, Morgan Kitts, and Madison Chesney. Both Kitts and Chesney competed at the NJCAA National Cross Country Championship, and Chesney was named Player of the Year.



## MEN'S SOCCER

The team finished the season 18-7. They were the runner-up in the Region X Tournament where they then advanced to the Southeast District Tournament. They had four All-Region selections — Robert Phillips, Davi Girardi, Jakari Davis, and Brody Poell.

## WOMEN'S SOCCER

Dan Kenneally, who was named Region X Coach of the Year, led the team to finish runner-up in the Region X Tournament. They then advanced to the Southeast District Tournament and had seven All-Region selections on the team — Elizabeth McGee, Cailyn Marietti, Heather Turner, Kolbi Crone, Jackie Marshall, Kassandra Young, and Meredith Mitchiner.



## VOLLEYBALL

Katie Zimmerman finished her first year as head coach by taking the team to the Region X Tournament where they placed as runner-up. They ended the season 14-19 and had three All-Region selections on the team — Claudia Casey, Aeyane Mattress, and Leslie Williams.



## MEN'S BASKETBALL

The team ended the season 19-11. Tracus Chisholm was named First Team All Region and Kai Rivers was named Second Team All Region.

## WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

The team placed first in the Region X regular season and won the Region X Tournament. They then advanced to District J where they placed runner-up, finishing the season 10-15. Bayleigh Ponds, Aliyah Whiteside, and Jayla Hopkins were named All Region. Hopkins was also named Region X Player of the Year, and Briana Clark was named Coach of the Year.



## WRESTLING

Six wrestlers qualified for the NJCAA National Wrestling Tournament. Tramon Jenkins finished eighth in the country in the 125 lbs. weight class and Caleb Spears finished fifth in the country in the 174 lbs. weight class. Jenkins and Spears were both named NJCAA All-Americans.



## BASEBALL

The team finished the season 33-18. Tim Wallace led the team to first place in the Region X regular season. They won the Region X Tournament, and they came in as runner-up for the Eastern District. Wallace received Coach of the Year. Houston Wright, Joey Tepper, John Miller, Jordan Jackson, and Nate Lamb were named First Team All Region. Jackson was named Pitcher of the Year, and Wright was named Player of the Year.

## SOFTBALL

The team finished the season 21-26 with a first-place finish in the Region X regular season. Hannah Cannon, Jessica Stanley, Brooke Moore, Lauren Reed, and Kristen Gass were named First Team All Region. Lindsay Jordahl, Emma Williams, and Alyssa Pennington were named Second Team All Region. Stanley was named Player of the Year.



## MEN'S GOLF

The team competed in the NJCAA National Golf Championships in Melbourne, Florida. Josh Sprouse and Montgomery Harrison were named All Region for Region X.

## WOMEN'S GOLF

The team headed down to Daytona Beach, Florida, to compete in the NJCAA National Golf Championships. Amelia Majcina was named All Region for Region X.

# LEADING ON AND OFF THE FIELD

ELMA NFOR '16  
PAYS FORWARD  
THE POSITIVITY HE  
BROUGHT TO SMC



*Photo courtesy of Aaron Cranford/Lansing Ignite FC*

By Samantha Wagner

**E**lma Nfor first learned to play soccer in Cameroon, the country in which he was born. “In Cameroon, everyone plays soccer. It’s basically a religion,” Elma says. “I learned to play as a child and fell in love with the sport. When we moved to the States, I remember my dad encouraging me to keep playing through all of the changes. He taught me that if I focused and put in the work and the time I could play professionally.”

For an 8-year-old boy living in a new country and a new culture, soccer remained comforting and consistent. “In those early months, everything was so overwhelming. I had lived in a small town in Cameroon with a few restaurants and a few stoplights but nothing else. Frankfort, Kentucky, in contrast, was so busy. The American world progressed at a much faster pace than I was used to.”

Public school was a particularly overwhelming experience. The teachers spoke quickly and often praised academic success while

neglecting athletic achievements. To a young Elma, it seemed that the academic and athletic worlds were highly polarized. This belief persisted throughout his early education, with school remaining challenging, frustrating, and uncomfortable as he aged. That perspective changed, however, when Elma found Spartanburg Methodist College. “I knew I wanted a smaller school because smaller schools allow you to know everyone, but I also knew that I wanted to play division one (D1) soccer and eventually pursue a professional career. Coach Nolan, the men’s soccer coach at Spartanburg Methodist College, saw me playing club ball in the Disney Soccer Showcase and assured me that SMC could offer me incredible opportunities on and off the field.”

Elma took a chance and enrolled. What followed were some of the most incredible years of his life both academically and athletically as he played against D1 and D2 soccer teams, built lasting life-long friendships, and discovered a passion for entrepreneurship.



From the moment he arrived on campus and met the guys on the team, Elma felt at home. Coach Nolan was a constant source of encouragement and inspiration. He challenged his team to rise to the occasion, pitting them against competitive D1 and D2 schools to refine and develop their abilities. "He was incredibly passionate and adamant that we could take on the bigger schools that frequently looked down on us for being a small college. He always believed in us and his faith gave us an edge that allowed us to play against some of the strongest teams and come out the victors."

Career-wise, this training was invaluable with his time at SMC placing him on a trajectory that led to his current position as a forward with the Lansing Ignite team — part of the United Soccer League One.

Growth for Elma, however, was not limited to the soccer field. Where once school had overwhelmed him, Elma loved his time in the classroom at SMC. With encouragement from his professors, he began to excel academically, leaving behind the negative thought patterns that had plagued his youth. "I never saw myself as the best student," Elma says, "and I was used to feeling like athletics were second to academia in the eyes of my teachers. At SMC, I had professors that wanted me to succeed in all of my endeavors. They were there for me and for my success both academically and athletically."

He remembers vividly the first time he entered a classroom carrying a soccer ball. His professor laughed, said, "You *would* bring a soccer ball to class!" and started teaching.

At SMC, questions were welcomed and professors were always available to offer insight and advice on everything from coursework to Elma's budding entrepreneurial pursuits. "I've always loved inventing things and puzzling out creative solutions to common problems," he states. "I'm sure I drove my College friends nuts with all of my different ideas."

Those ideas were varied and often involved late nights full of discussion and laughter as he roped his friends and long-term girlfriend, Bailey Wilson, into his schemes. One of his more elaborate ideas revolved around musical composition, with he and his roommate Zorrie Green staying up until 5 a.m. penning songs. While his musical endeavors never left the dorm room, however, his more serious inventions did. "So many of the professors at SMC listened to my 'pitches' and encouraged me to develop and refine them. I never had professor Keisler in class, but I remember bringing ideas to his office and watching his enthusiasm. He often seemed more excited for me than I was for myself!"

Since his time at SMC, Elma used the values instilled by his College and has grown into an incredible servant leader dedicated to his athletic and entrepreneurial careers. After SMC, Elma attended Wingate College, where he played soccer and developed his first invention, the Bonding Tie — a tie that buttons to a dress shirt and stays in place even in windy weather conditions. His ideas, however, didn't stop at practical inventions. Drawing on his own memories of school and its struggles, Elma launched a school lunch club in the Asheville area called Kingsman. The club is dedicated to creating positive experiences for students by teaching them how to present themselves confidently. "The mind is so powerful and I want kids to have a positive mindset at a young age — particularly those who have been bullied and struggle to feel confident. Volunteering with the schools reminds me to stay positive, focused, and confident, myself. I love soccer, but I think my calling lies with kids and with my endeavors in public speaking."

For now, however, Elma continues to enjoy professional soccer, playing as a new forward for the Lansing Ignite team. He loves his job and already has plans to start another school lunch club for students in the Lansing area. It seems

his entrepreneurial mind never sleeps as he strives to make life better for those around him — a desire he developed at a small, southern college. When asked what advice he would share with college students today, Elma said simply, "Get to know the people around you and they will become your community. Their real-life stories will not only impact you but will also change your life." ■



Photo courtesy of Lansing Ignite FC



Photo courtesy of Miguel Arcaute/Lansing Ignite FC

A full-page photograph of a woman with blonde hair, smiling, standing in a modern building interior. She is wearing a black long-sleeved top tied at the waist and black pants with white vertical stripes. She has her left hand on her hip. The background features a stone wall on the left, a wooden handrail, and large glass windows. The floor is polished and reflective.

# A LOFTY GOAL

LARSEN FRALIX  
PLANS A CAREER AS A  
MISSIONARY PILOT



By Elva Ramirez

**M**ost SMC students aim to fly high, but freshman Larsen Fralix literally soars above it all.

Not only did Fralix juggle her course load as an SMC business major, but she's also attended flight school and is training to become a professional pilot at the same time.

Fralix, who turned 20 in June, hails from Summerton, South Carolina, where, during high school, she rose through the ranks to become the AFJROTC Group Commander of her unit at Manning High School. She went on to become one of the highest-ranking cadets during a summer student leadership camp at the Citadel in Charleston, South Carolina.

It was during junior year that she discovered what she now considers to be her life's calling. A pilot visited her AFJROTC unit and discussed his passion for his work. "That sounds like so much fun," Fralix recalls thinking. "I want to do that."

Following the pilot's visit, Fralix picked up an internship at South Carolina's Precision Air at the Santee Cooper Airport during her last two years in high school, where she observed and assisted the mechanics as they repaired damaged planes. One day, a local pilot invited her to join him for a test ride. "That's when I realized I loved flying," Fralix says. "I want to do this for a living."

She chose to attend SMC in part because it's so close to a flight school and because of the generous academic scholarships she received. "As soon as I started classes here at SMC, I started flight school," Fralix says. She's finished eight weeks of ground school and is now taking flying lessons with Instructor Terry Connorton, Director of Spartanburg Downtown Memorial Airport.

"When I'm in the air, I feel there's no one in the air but me," Fralix says. "You look down and you think, there's so many people in the world. You just want to be free. That's what I love about it so much."

Her love of flying led to what she describes as a moment from above. "God spoke to me," Fralix says. "He said, 'Share your testimony. This is what I call you to do.' He spoke the words 'missionary pilot.'"

But the route to becoming a missionary pilot isn't so simple, although the job combines Fralix's multiple interests. A missionary pilot is tasked with dropping off and picking up people in a range of climates and terrains. Pilots have to have multiple certifications, including advanced maintenance ratings and CPR/first aid.

"That's exactly what I want to do," Fralix says. "I've been a life guard for over three years. I have experience working on planes. I have experience flying. And I love the Word of God."

Missionary pilots don't emerge overnight, however. They typically have to have over 1,000 hours in the air and several years of flight experience before being considered viable applicants. Fralix transferred to Middle Georgia State University School of Aviation to get her bachelor's degree in Aviation, and will then follow up her post-college career with a part-time job in the Air Force Reserves while flying commercially for a cargo company like UPS. This way, she builds up flight experience as both a military and a private pilot, she reasons.

Fralix's career choice is already garnering her attention. This past spring, she was awarded a \$5,000 scholarship from Women in Aviation International and a \$1,000 scholarship from the South Carolina Aviation Association, which Fralix will use toward paying for her



school and flight lessons in pursuit of her pilot's license. She has around 15 hours of the 40 hours required. (Each flight lesson costs around \$200 per hour.)

Along with schoolwork and flight school, Fralix found time to work as the social media officer for the Palmetto Pride Chapter of WAI, as an airport assistant at her local airport, and as a resident assistant in one of the SMC residence halls.

Her education at SMC is already helping her with her pilot's work, she says. Classes like pre-calculus have come in handy when she needed to work out real-world problems like estimating how much fuel will last over long distances.

Additionally, she found the support of her SMC professors invaluable as she worked toward what she considers her life goal.

"She's a very conscientious student," SMC professor and Fralix's academic adviser Dr. Ben Sloop says. "She was a joy to teach. To balance her studies here with afternoon responsibilities is quite impressive," he adds. "She has to be incredibly organized."

As Fralix completes her education, she's managing all of her many responsibilities. But one thing is clear: All her goals center around flying as often as she can, and one day, using her talent as a pilot to help others. ■

# SPARTANBURG COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

*L to R:  
Elizabeth Renneker,  
Zan Raymond,  
Donna Phillips*



## SUPPORTING VICTIMS, CREATING SURVIVORS

**THREE SMC ALUMS WORK ON  
THE FRONT LINES OF DOMESTIC  
VIOLENCE INVESTIGATIONS**

By Baker Maultsby

**T**hey provide support and compassion for those in desperate situations. They work to solve issues that are shocking, yet remain hidden to most in their community.

Spartanburg Methodist College graduates Elizabeth Renneker, Zan Raymond, and Donna Phillips work on domestic violence and Special Victims Unit (SVU) cases for the Spartanburg County Sheriff's Office. "We are there to help people in their worst moments," said Renneker, a 2003 graduate.



Renneker is an investigator with the Sheriff's Office. Raymond, class of 1988, and Phillips, class of 1987, work as victims' advocates.

While Renneker studies cases to determine whether arrests should be made, Raymond and Phillips contact victims to learn about their immediate and long-term needs and to offer support. They work closely with community organizations such as emergency shelters and counseling centers.

Raymond explained, "For investigators, it's about making the best criminal case possible. Our job is to be there for the victim — holding them and crying with them sometimes, showing kindness and offering hope."

At the same time, Phillips stressed, "Every person who is a crime victim, regardless of the crime, will have their own individual response in dealing with the experience. One challenge is finding the best remedy that will benefit the victim in coping with the aftermath of the crime and finding their new normal."

As one might imagine, this isn't easy work. It can be emotionally taxing. It can leave disturbing images and lead to difficult questions. "Some days are better than others," Raymond said. "I don't watch crime shows when I'm at home. I just watch comedy — that's my coping mechanism."

Raymond draws perspective and inspiration from her own family's experience with domestic violence. When she was a teenager, her grandfather killed her grandmother.

Raymond's family knew that her grandfather would at times become violent. Sometimes her grandmother would leave and stay for a few days at Raymond's parents' home in Great Falls, but she always went back.

Raymond hopes for other women to leave for good — or embrace other changes —

when it's necessary for their protection or the well-being of their children. "I want them to understand, 'You can conquer this. It doesn't have to be your life.'"

Renneker, meanwhile, is focused on helping victims by seeing criminals held accountable in the court of law. "It's what keeps you going — getting a case, working the facts, seeking justice," she says.

Renneker, Phillips, and Raymond each tout their SMC education and the influence the College has had on their lives and careers.

Raymond described Great Falls as a "one stoplight town." Spartanburg seemed like a big place, and SMC exposed her to new ideas and career possibilities.

For Phillips, who grew up in Spartanburg, academic, and social experiences at SMC helped her to "grow my independence and uncover my desire to serve my community."

Renneker, who went to nearby Boiling Springs High School, talked about the influence of retired Criminal Justice Professor Lorna Hanson. "She was amazing," Renneker says. "She's just a huge role model. She pushed you. She

taught you to do the best you can do, to set goals and work hard toward them."

In addition to domestic violence cases, Renneker investigates cases of alleged abuse or neglect of vulnerable adults. Victims include elderly adults and homeless veterans who have been targets of fraud and exploitation.

Overall, she read roughly 10 police reports a day in 2018. Not each led to an intensive investigation or an arrest, but there was plenty of work for Renneker.

The partnership of Phillips and Raymond is essential to her efforts. Addressing the needs of victims enables Renneker to focus on investigating evidence and building a case. Meanwhile, victims who can find a sense of calm and confidence are likely to be more helpful to police investigators and prosecutors.

And when all of these pieces of the puzzle come together, there's a better chance for the best possible outcome. That's what these three SMC graduates are working toward each day.

Phillips put it this way: "My greatest reward is seeing a victim transform into a survivor." ■

*"Our job is to be there for the victim — holding them and crying with them sometimes, showing kindness and offering hope."*

— Zan Raymond



# LOOKING BACK

A PATH TO SUCCESS  
PAVED BY SMC



By Miranda Kozman

**If you've done business with the healthcare industry in South Carolina, you've likely encountered one of Gary Cooper's businesses. Gary Cooper is a prolific entrepreneur whose endeavors include hospice care, home medical equipment, pharmacies, and more. Over the past two decades, he has successfully built and grown several companies in the Carolinas, which landed him a nomination as a finalist for Ernst & Young's Entrepreneur of the Year award in 2007. Although he started his career alongside his father, he has now taken the helm and made a name for himself.**

Cooper currently runs Palmetto Infusions, a company dedicated to providing a caring and comfortable environment for patients who require drug-infusion treatments for chronic conditions such as multiple sclerosis, lupus, and Chrone's disease. Cooper and his father took the small company with limited revenue and no employees, and they transformed it into a much larger operation with several hundred employees.

When asked what he sees as the key to building a successful business, Cooper could easily focus on investors or business plans, but he doesn't. He is acutely focused on the well-being and comfort of his customers. He believes his businesses have been successful because of the customer-focused culture he strives to create.

"We've been successful because we treat people differently," Cooper says. "We remember every patient's name. We make it easy to get into our centers. We make the centers comfortable. We use our relationships in the industry to reduce the cost of drugs. We provide patients with snacks and free Wi-Fi while they wait. Those are the things that make the difference."

Cooper's approach has proven successful, and Palmetto Infusion has grown to 23 locations with plans for expansion in the future. "We're growing because people are choosing us. People want us," he says.

It has taken Cooper a few decades to appreciate how Spartanburg Methodist College paved his way to success and influenced his early career. "SMC has a willingness to accept students who don't get accepted to other schools," he recalls. "I was that kid that nobody else wanted. I came from a small town, and I came with terrible grades. SMC gave me a chance that nobody else gave me, and I'm grateful for that."

Yet when Gary arrived at SMC in 1990, it wasn't all roses. He felt he had something to prove, and he carried some lingering disappointment. "Because I hadn't been accepted to a lot of colleges, I had a chip on my shoulder," he admits. "But I decided to use that chip to my advantage. I decided that I wasn't going to be limited because I came out of a small

town, and I didn't get accepted into those other schools. And that helped me. Now I sit in these boardrooms, and I'm competing with people who graduated from Wharton and Stanford and Harvard. But I never see myself as lesser."

Although he was able to harness his disappointment and turn it into motivation, he still acknowledges he made some mistakes along the way. As he reflects on his early academic career, he wishes he had finished his second year at SMC before moving on to Wofford.

"Originally, I wanted to do pre-med at Wofford College, but I didn't get in. So I went to SMC and started taking some of the classes I needed. Then I left SMC after one year because I thought I was ready academically. When I transferred to Wofford, it turned out I wasn't prepared. So thinking about it now, I wish I would have stayed at SMC longer and done more to prepare. I'm in my forties and that's probably one of my biggest regrets."

Cooper got to Wofford College and realized quickly he did not care for the classes in the pre-med program. He happened to take an economics class that piqued his interest, and his career abruptly took a turn toward business and business administration.

When asked what SMC did for his career, Cooper doesn't mince words. "SMC reinforced my work ethic. I think I had a good work ethic already, but SMC made it stronger. I knew I had to work hard and get my grades up if I wanted to move on to a four-year school." That strong work ethic has now propelled him to the top of his industry.

He also credits SMC with setting high expectations for his future. "There was always an expectation from the teachers that we would, without a doubt, move on to a four-year program," he says. The teachers were always giving us advice about what to do *when* we went to the next institution — never *if* we got there — always *when* we did."

As Cooper has moved through his career, he has learned important lessons about success that he hopes can be shared with young entrepreneurs and students at SMC. "In business, so many people get caught up in their egos. I did, too, at times. It's taken me a while to mature and realize that you have to create the space for your team. It's not just about you. One person can only do some much. But if you step back and allow others on your team to grow and get credit, it makes you grow ten-fold."

Gary's focus on the people he works with, both his customers and his employees, has been crucial to his success, and he seems determined to hold tight to those values as he continues his career. With several decades of successful business development under his belt, he is showing no signs of slowing down. ■

# ALUMNI PROFILES

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## ALBERT ROSE, CLASS OF 1993

If you asked Albert Rose to categorize his work as a financial representative with Principal Financial Group in one word, he would pick service. “I feel called to serve and help others through smart financial and retirement planning,” he says. “People live in the day-to-day reality of their work and lives, but they need help considering their long-term plans. I get to help with that process.”

For him, his work is a calling where he can impact individuals across South Carolina in an area that is critically important to an individual’s future success.

Albert’s dedication to serving others, however, started before his time in the financial world. At SMC, Albert was involved with the campus community as a student, friend, and peer tutor. From intramural basketball to tennis after classes, he was engaged with his classmates and felt connected to the community on campus. As a peer tutor, he assisted fellow students with math, English, and other subjects.

It was an invaluable experience for him as he learned how to tailor his explanations to the needs of each individual. It’s a skill that has served him well in his current occupation.

“I get to help each person I work with design a game plan for their financial future. Knowing how to adapt my message to each client has been helpful.”

He credits SMC for preparing him with both practical people skills and a servant leadership mindset. “The faculty and staff at Spartanburg Methodist College feel called to serve their students and to prepare them for the next step in life,” he says. “I kept in touch with many of my professors and advisers throughout my time at SMC and early professional years. Their dedication and belief in me has given me inspiration throughout my career.”

Now as a financial representative, father, and husband he hopes to continue his life of servant leadership for many years to come.

*“I kept in touch with many of my professors and advisers throughout my time at SMC and early professional years. Their dedication and belief in me has given me inspiration throughout my career.”*

— Albert Rose



ALUMNI EVENING *of*

# DUELING PIANOS

*Homecoming*  
2019



SATURDAY

NOVEMBER 16, 6-9PM

*Hors d'oeuvres, open bar with beer and wine*



**FOUNDERS**  
FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

*Event sponsored by Founders Federal Credit Union.*

TICKETS ARE \$25

Reserved Tables Are \$500 (8 seats)

**ORDER TICKETS AT**

[www.smcsc.edu/homecoming](http://www.smcsc.edu/homecoming)

LIVE *and*  
SILENT  
AUCTION

## DAVID PADGETT, CLASS OF 1988

Officer David Padgett was selected as a finalist for the 2019 Charlotte Mecklenburg Community Police Relations Award for his work with the Latin American Coalition. Padgett has worked closely with the Latin American Coalition over the last five years to find a location to open a day labor center in order to give day laborers a safe place out of the elements while they wait on contractors to pick them up for work. Padgett also led several glove and coat drives to ensure that day laborers have the necessary clothing items while working outside in different types of weather.

In 2018, Padgett retired from the United States Army Reserve after 30 years of honorable service. During his time in the Army, Padgett earned the title of Lieutenant Colonel and was deployed to Kuwait, Iraq, and Afghanistan.

When asked about his time at SMC, Padgett says, "I gained a new appreciation for academia due to the patience of my professors and student tutors. Of my four years of college, my experiences at SMC will always be my favorite. I took the study skills I gained from SMC and continued my studies at Presbyterian College where I received my major in Political Science and a minor in English Literature."



## TINA HUMPHRIES, CLASS OF 1990



As the principal of James H. Hendrix Elementary IB World School, Tina Humphries champions education, life-long-learning and vibrant community — values indelibly linked to her years at SMC. At 18, however, Tina's focus was not in the academic arena, but in the athletic one. She often felt that academics were separate from her personal passions and she selected SMC largely for the Women's Soccer program. Once enrolled, she encountered a community that welcomed her, professors that challenged her, and curriculum that transformed a wary student-athlete into a woman committed to education.

"SMC helped me challenge and refine my beliefs," she says. "I remember Betty Griffin's World Religion Class as being particularly impactful."

She encouraged us to consider our personal beliefs while also considering the beliefs of other cultures. Having a multi-cultural perspective has greatly impacted my ability to lead such a diverse and unique school."

Indeed, the elementary students at James H. Hendrix represent a wide array of cultures including those from Ukraine, Russia, and Latin America. In such a cultural melting pot, it is important to her that students "bring their passions to school in order to use those passions to engage with learning."

Such an outlook has created an incredible learning environment where students learn two powerful lessons: education can be fun and community can be found in diversity.



2019-2020

# ALUMNI

*Save the Date*



# CALENDAR

**16**  
**NOV**  
2019

## • HOMECOMING

*Join us on campus as we celebrate being Pioneers.*

Alumni Evening of **DUELING PIANOS**

*Benefiting the Annual Fund*

*Hors d'oeuvres, open bar with beer and wine*

*Register to attend:*

[WWW.SMCSC.EDU/HOMECOMING](http://WWW.SMCSC.EDU/HOMECOMING)

**06**  
**DEC**  
2019

*Alumni & Friends*

## • CHRISTMAS PARTY

Forevermore Farms

Moore, South Carolina

*Bring your family and friends to enjoy a complimentary barbecue dinner with cash bar (beer and wine). Casual dress.*

*RSVP to* [SNOWB@SMCSC.EDU](mailto:SNOWB@SMCSC.EDU)

**21**  
**FEB**  
2020

## • OYSTER ROAST

Bowens Island Restaurant

Charleston, South Carolina

*Enjoy oysters from a Charleston Favorite!  
\$15 per person. Cash bar and casual dress.*

*Register to attend:*

[WWW.SMCSC.EDU/BOWENSISLAND](http://WWW.SMCSC.EDU/BOWENSISLAND)



## TERRY HALL, CLASS OF 1979



*L to R: Andrew Hall, '12, Terry Hall '79, Christopher Hall '08*

Terry Hall is the owner and operator of Larry's Trophy's along with his two sons, Christopher and Andrew, and he is also an enthusiastic supporter of Spartanburg Methodist College. "The College invests in their students and makes school affordable for young people who want an education. SMC is there to help students in need of scholarships and to offer support regardless of the circumstances."

He himself was the beneficiary of a bowling scholarship that allowed him to attend the school before transferring to USC Spartanburg to complete his accounting degree. "Some of the best memories of my life happened at Spartanburg Methodist College. I got to travel with the bowling team and Coach Moore, and I was prepared well to become a small-business owner here in Spartanburg."

The trophy shop started as a business venture between Terry and his close mentor Larry Murray — hence the name Larry's Trophies. Now operating the store as a family-owned business, Terry is proud of the quality of trophies his shop produces and proud that his sons, both SMC alums, are a part of the production process. He is thankful for the school that helped prepare him and his sons for the business world, for bowling — the sport that helped make it all possible — and for the friends and mentors who have taught him much along the way.

## JERRY STOKES, CLASS OF 1968



"Running teaches you about life," Jerry Stokes says. "In a marathon, your body tells you to quit, but you have to persevere. A marathon teaches you to push past your doubts in order to keep chasing the goal."

Persevering is something Jerry Stokes has done throughout his life — from his years at Spartanburg Methodist College to his life as an accountant, cross-country coach, and loving father. As the first person in his family to pursue a college degree, Jerry worked several jobs to pay for tuition at Spartanburg Methodist before transferring on to USC to complete a Psychology degree. "Spartanburg Methodist was

excellent at laying the foundation for future learning. It was an excellent steppingstone in my life," he states.

From there, he worked full time with an insurance company while also enrolled in evening classes to become a CPA. It was during his early professional career that he discovered running — a passion he has enjoyed for more than 45 years. Now at 71 years old, Jerry still works as a CPA with no plans for retirement. He also coaches cross-country for Camden High School and still runs marathons. He enjoys what he does and is thankful for the opportunity to have impacted so many people simply from his love of running.



# Class Notes

**1954**

**Mr. Hoyle Edwards**

Mr. Edwards is retired from Baltimore MD County Schools. He is in his 25th year teaching at Fruitland Baptist Bible College.

**1957**

**The Reverend Harry R. Stullenbarger**

Reverend Stullenbarger served as a United Methodist minister, serving churches in South Carolina for 55 years. He is now retired and living in Pawleys Island, SC.

**1958**

**Mr. Herman H. Whitaker Jr.**

Mr. Whitaker still enjoys farming. His major interest is flowers, especially day lilies.

**1962**

**Mr. Alfred M. McGaha**

Mr. McGaha is retired from being an Elementary School Principal for 36 years in Cherokee County. He is also a retired Real Estate Agent from Buice Realty in Gaffney, SC. Mr. McGaha is currently doing volunteer work at PEACHCenter Minsitries in Gaffney, SC, and teaching Adult Reading at Cherokee Literacy.

**1963**

**Mr. William J. Rivers**

Mr. Rivers retired in 2010 after 30 years in the work force in Myrtle Beach, SC. He has since moved back to his family farm in Cheraw, SC. He spends time at home as well as in Lake Lure, NC, at his cabin. He visits often with fellow SJC classmates.

**1964**

**Mrs. Marilyn Lawson Holden**

Mrs. Holden is married to Alfred Holden and has one son, Mark Holden, and three grandchildren. She is retired from Spartanburg County District 1 School System where she was the Science Lab Coordinator at Chapman High School. She also taught AP Chemistry. She is enjoying retirement and living on a small farm in Inman, SC.

**1964**

**Mr. Dwight R. Johnson**

Mr. Johnson retired from the United States Postal Service in November 2018, after working there for 20 years.

**1973**

**Dr. John Waltrip Irwin, Ph.D.**

Dr. Irwin is retired from Clemson University Extension. He now operates Irwin Farm in Laurens, SC. He is the proud grandparent of four fabulous grandchildren.

**1975**

**Mr. Charles B. Hembree**

Mr. Hembree's granddaughter, Molly Grayson Lawson, is currently attending SMC and plays on the tennis team. His grandson, Graham Lawson, attended SMC and played baseball, and is now pitching at the University of South Carolina. Graham was also drafted by the Washington Nationals in June of 2018. Mr. Hembree's son, Phil Hembree, also attended SMC and played baseball.

**1976**

**Mrs. Gloria Greer Elledge**

Mrs. Elledge is enjoying being retired. She can now shop as long as she wants. Her grandchildren Brittani, Kayla, and Jennifer are now out of college and can shop with her. They also love to go to the Beacon and eat.

**1976**

**Mrs. Faye Belton Lowry**

Mrs. Lowry is now a retired educator, after 33 years of service.

**1986**

**Mrs. Karan Carlton Schriver**

Karan Carlton Schriver is a retired Navy Captain and works as Senior Research Scientist for the defense and security field. She directs project teams in the development of big data models to answer today's complex National Security issues.

**1992**

**Mr. Leon Toby Myers**

Mr. Myers is a Freelance Photographer and has his own Photography business in Sumter, SC.

**1999**

**Mr. Troy Edward Fields**

Mr. Fields and his wife, Danielle, have a 4-year-old daughter named Kate, and are welcoming their second child, another girl, in July 2019.

**2017**

**Mrs. Sarah Grace Reed Smith**

Sarah Grace met her husband, Grayson, at SMC where they both attended. They are both very thankful for SMC for bringing them together and for the opportunities that they were given. Sarah Grace was a Presidential Ambassador and Grayson was a Pioneer Peer. Now, Grayson is the Residence Hall Director in Bridges Residence Hall. They can't get enough of SMC. They love it at SMC.

**Share your news with Frontiers readers!**

Visit [www.smcsc.edu/alumni-and-friends/update](http://www.smcsc.edu/alumni-and-friends/update) to send a note for publication in Frontiers.

# *In* MEMORIAM

**Mrs. Mary Smith Thrower '39**

of North Charleston, SC,  
died December 18, 2017.

**Mr. Randolph Bowen Bradford '40**

of Pauline, SC,  
died September 8, 2019.

**Mr. James L. Littlejohn '40**

of Jonesville, SC,  
died April 14, 2019.

**Ms. Evelyn Stanley Long '41**

of Conway, SC,  
died February 19, 2018.

**Mr. Fletcher D. Thompson '41**

of Spartanburg, SC,  
died December 17, 2017.

**Mrs. Ruth Bishop Jones '42**

of North Abington Township, PA,  
died July 12, 2017.

**Mrs. Mary Todd Thompson '42**

of Kingstree, SC,  
died June 1, 2017.

**Mrs. Louise Smith Tinsley '42**

of Columbia, SC,  
died March 3, 2018.

**Mrs. Gladys Belk Blackmon '44**

of Rock Hill, SC,  
died February 18, 2017.

**Mr. Louis W. Rolen, Jr. '44**

of Inman, SC,  
died April 3, 2017.

**Mrs. Naomi Morrison Saunders '44**

of Port Saint Lucie, FL,  
died April 10, 2018.

**Mrs. Sara Flynn Calvert '45**

of Eatonton, GA,  
died February 11, 2017.

**Ms. Frances Lawson Dickinson '46**

of Cowpens, SC,  
died May 30, 2019.

**Mrs. Jossie Fox Nichols '46**

of Sarasota, FL,  
died March 18, 2017.

**Mrs. Jean Casey Brittain '47**

of Myrtle Beach, SC,  
died February 7, 2018.

**Mr. Walker Charles Mabry '47**

of Wilson, NC,  
died December 23, 2017.

**Mrs. Juanita Horton Stepp '47**

of Boiling Springs, SC,  
died May 27, 2019.

**Mr. Benjamin R. McClimon '48**

of Greer, SC,  
died January 15, 2017.

**The Reverend William Whitfield McNeill, Sr. '48**

of Maggie Valley, NC,  
died February 28, 2019.

**Mrs. Mary Wilburn Waddell '48**

of Aiken, SC,  
died February 11, 2018.

**Mr. Joseph Ray Clary '49**

of Raleigh, NC,  
died November 8, 2018.

**Mr. John A. Radeck '49**

of Aiken, SC,  
died May 30, 2017.





**Mrs. Alma Jolley Riley '49**

of Grove City, OH,  
died February 28, 2019.

**Mrs. Peggy Bishop Collins '50**

of Rock Hill, SC,  
died November 5, 2017.

**Mrs. Sybil Alexander Franks '50**

of Carnesville, GA,  
died November 16, 2017.

**Mr. James Pinkney Huskey '50**

of Marion, SC,  
died October 31, 2017.

**Mr. Lloyd Fritz Morrison '50**

of Hartsville, SC,  
died May 25, 2017.

**Mrs. Juanita Guthrie Rogers '50**

of Greer, SC,  
died January 31, 2018.

**Mrs. Betty Vaughn Acuff '51**

of Chipley, FL,  
died January 8, 2018.

**Lt. Col. Arthur T. Ballard, Jr. '51**

of Spartanburg, SC,  
died May 23, 2019.

**Mrs. Maxine Spence Fowler '51**

of Waynesboro, VA,  
died May 31, 2018.

**Mr. Charles Hallman '51**

of Spartanburg, SC,  
died September 8, 2017.

**Mrs. Iris Scott Taylor '51**

of Anderson, SC,  
died April 5, 2019.

**Mrs. Dorothy Thorne Gwinn '52**

of Inman, SC,  
died June 20, 2017.

**Mr. William Miles O'Dell '52**

of Spartanburg, SC,  
died September 9, 2017.

**Mr. Kenneth Samuel Holt '53**

of Conway, SC,  
died January 14, 2018.

**Mr. Francis Marion Knight '53**

of Florence, SC,  
died July 30, 2019.

**The Reverend Robert Williams Tanner '53**

of Orangeburg, SC,  
died December 20, 2017.

**Mr. Ralph D. Vaughan '54**

of Galax, VA,  
died May 29, 2018.

**Ms. Mary F. Wells '55**

of Augusta, GA,  
died January 2, 2018.

**Mr. Donald Edward White '55**

of Spartanburg, SC,  
died January 22, 2018.

**Mr. Johnnie M. Lewis '56**

of Rocky Mount, NC,  
died March 14, 2018.

**Mr. Franklin M. Mann '56**

of Fairforest, SC,  
died November 20, 2017.

**Mr. Leonard Reid Marsh '56**

of Spartanburg, SC,  
died January 14, 2019.

**Dr. Hugh A. Hayes, DVM '58**

of Spartanburg, SC,  
died February 12, 2018.

**Mrs. Rachael Dillard Jolly '58**

of Spartanburg, SC,  
died November 22, 2018.

**Mr. Ralph M. Kesler '58**

of Anderson, SC,  
died October 22, 2017.

**Mr. Boyd Hugh Melton '58**

of Salem, SC,  
died December 11, 2017.





**Mr. Owings Francis Austin '59**

of Wilmington, NC,  
died August 28, 2019.

**Mrs. Elizabeth Stevens Jack '59**

of Boiling Springs, SC,  
died August 1, 2017.

**Mr. Leslie Lamar McKinney '60**

of Chesnee, SC,  
died December 12, 2017.

**Mr. Ralph Oswald Parris, Jr. '60**

of Spartanburg, SC,  
died February 1, 2019.

**Mrs. Helen Harmon Harrelson '61**

of Spartanburg, SC,  
died April 19, 2018.

**Mr. Kenneth Denton '62**

of Campobello, SC,  
died June 16, 2017.

**Mr. David K. Smith, Sr. '62**

of Boiling Springs, SC,  
died April 7, 2019.

**Mr. Robert William Brooks '63**

of West Columbia, SC,  
died November 11, 2017.

**Mr. Charles D. Broome '63**

of Spartanburg, SC,  
died April 10, 2019.

**Mr. Jack Arthur Patterson '63**

of Woodruff, SC,  
died January 4, 2017.

**Mr. Charles Henry Payne '63**

of Campobello, SC,  
died January 28, 2017.

**Dr. Brenda Wilkie Bender-Sayyad,  
Ph.D. '64**

of Wadmalaw Island, SC,  
died January 20, 2019.

**Mr. Robert Lloyd Carter '64**

of Charlotte, NC,  
died January 25, 2018.

**Mr. Curtis Ivan Gaddy '64**

of Chester, SC,  
died June 22, 2019.

**Mr. Steve D. Grissom '64**

of Clover, SC,  
died September 2, 2017.

**Mr. Hugh Leland Harrelson, Sr. '64**

of North Myrtle Beach, SC,  
died February 21, 2019.

**Ms. James Joseph McAndrew II '64**

of Charleston, SC,  
died February 15, 2018.

**Mrs. Judith Bobo Hughes '65**

of West Columbia, SC,  
died November 17, 2018.

**Mrs. Mary White Nelson '65**

of Hollywood, SC,  
died March 9, 2019.

**Mrs. Lynne Atkinson Berry '66**

of Charlotte, NC,  
died December 30, 2017.

**Mr. Reggie W. Cox '67**

of Inman, SC,  
died March 6, 2017.

**Mr. David J. McIntosh '68**

of Palm City, FL,  
died July 22, 2018.

**Mr. Erik Fred Anderson '71**

of Moore, SC,  
died December 30, 2017.

**Mr. Phillip A. Compton '71**

of Spartanburg, SC,  
died September 1, 2017.

**Mrs. Margaret Benton Jones '71**

of Moore, SC,  
died January 6, 2017.

**Mr. William Harold Littleton, Jr. '73**

of Spartanburg, SC,  
died June 11, 2017.



**Mr. Clyde Hare McCants '73**

of Bonneau, SC,  
died January 9, 2018.

**Mr. John H. Hall, Jr. '74**

of Spartanburg, SC,  
died October 28, 2017.

**CDR Dan R. Kimberlain, Jr. '74**

of Arlington, VA,  
died July 12, 2017.

**Mr. James Robert Norris '74**

of Cincinnati, OH,  
died February 4, 2017.

**Ms. Shirley Dill Worthy '74**

of Spartanburg, SC,  
died June 2, 2018.

**Mr. Henry Franklin Hall '76**

of Woodruff, SC,  
died April 27, 2018.

**Ms. Virginia H. Harmon '76**

of Pacolet, SC,  
died May 29, 2017.

**Mrs. Denise Bickett Pitts '76**

of Florence, SC,  
died May 10, 2019.

**Mr. Michael Laurens Pruitt '76**

of Spartanburg, SC,  
died May 24, 2018.

**Ms. Jane Varn Davis '77**

of Inman, SC,  
died April 23, 2017.

**The Reverend James Otis Harper '77**

of Union, SC,  
died January 18, 2018.

**Mr. Keith M. Funderburk '78**

of Spartanburg, SC,  
died July 25, 2019.

**Mr. David Michael Burke '79**

of Spartanburg, SC,  
died January 9, 2018.

**Mr. Michael Wayne Few '79**

of Florence, SC,  
died April 17, 2019.

**Mrs. Pennie McAlhany Wendelken '80**

of Pickens, SC,  
died October 27, 2018.

**Mr. Milton Blair Wilson '80**

of Chapin, SC,  
died January 4, 2018.

**Mr. William Lamar Skinner '84**

of Enoree, SC,  
died October 18, 2018.

**Ms. Catherine M. Lee '87**

of Chesnee, SC,  
died August 6, 2018.

**Ms. Arthenia Martin '87**

of Spartanburg, SC,  
died March 2018.

**Mr. John G. Wofford, Jr. '91**

of Spartanburg, SC,  
died April 13, 2018.

**Mr. Stephen Michael Verigood '96**

of Columbia, SC,  
died July 14, 2017.

**Mr. Joey Dwight Kimbrell '00**

of Dyersburg, TN,  
died March 27, 2017.

**Ms. Laura Ann Dobbins '02**

of Inman, SC,  
died July 15, 2017.

**Mr. Tyler Lea Slaughter '07**

of Ringgold, GA,  
died July 29, 2017.

**Ms. Jordane Micheil Bouchillon '16**

of Greenville, SC,  
died October 4, 2018.

**Mr. Larrington Alphonso  
Richardson, Jr. '16**

of Spartanburg, SC,  
died February 20, 2019.





*Spartanburg Methodist College*

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