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## 2022 Report from the Board Chair

February 15, 2023

To Members of the University of South Carolina System Community:

We who compose the University of South Carolina (USC) Board of Trustees take seriously our fiduciary duties to the USC System. Among these duties are to further the mission of each USC System institution; to provide exceptional living and learning communities for the pursuit of teaching, research, creative activity, and service; and to uphold statutes, bylaws, and policies. The Board of Trustees fulfills South Carolinians' rightful expectations for educational excellence and sound stewardship of State resources.

[Collectively, the USC System is the State of South Carolina's leading educator](#), serving more than 51,000 students on eight campuses that include 20 individual sites for course delivery. The System confers more than 12,300 undergraduate, graduate, and professional degrees annually, employing 17,238 people, including 3,520 faculty. There are approximately 340,000 System alumni worldwide. [System campuses and alumni in South Carolina contribute \\$6.2 billion to the State's economy on an annual basis.](#)

Our University is experiencing significant growth, thanks to record numbers of applications and enrollees, along with additional investments by State government. The USC System currently awards 2,400 more degrees per year than it did just 10 years ago. [Some 42,000 students applied to join the Fall 2022 entering class at USC Columbia](#), where the University is completing the construction of [the largest student housing project in the history of the State of South Carolina](#).

Our University celebrated superlatives in rankings in 2022, including being recognized as the [#1 university in the country for veterans and military service members](#). Our University maintained its [#1 ranking for students' first-year experience and the #1 undergraduate international business program](#). Furthermore, USC Columbia claims more

nationally ranked academic programs, more graduate programs in the health sciences, and more *U.S. News*-ranked graduate programs than any other university or college in the State.

The 2022 calendar year was momentous for the Board and the USC System. First and foremost was [the Board's election of Dr. Michael Amiridis as the University of South Carolina's 30th President](#) on January 14. Since assuming office on July 1, President Amiridis has embraced his duties and responsibilities. The Board is optimistic and enthusiastic about the future of the University under President Amiridis's leadership.

Other achievements recorded by the Board of Trustees during 2022 include the following:

- conferring approximately 12,304 degrees across the University System, through authority delegated by the Board to the President and Chancellors;
- governing the assembly of entering classes of remarkable quality and diversity throughout the System, including [the largest and most diverse class of freshmen ever to enter USC Columbia](#);
- introducing [a new, bold spirit mark for the University](#) that re-established use of the iconic "USC" that is so beloved by students, graduates, and supporters;
- [approving a state budget request](#) for FY 2023-24 that asks the General Assembly for assistance in containing tuition prices, renovating and constructing educational spaces, and supporting research initiatives with the potential to improve human lives;
- enabling the commitment of [\\$10 million over four years to establish new research institutes at USC Columbia](#);
- supporting [an interdisciplinary certificate program in Digital Studies](#), to provide students with improved technical proficiency and readiness for the workforce;
- [growing the University's partnership with Lexington Medical Center](#), which will produce a 50,000-square-foot education and training space for students from USC Columbia's College of Nursing;
- [naming the student residence building at 700 Lincoln Street](#) in honorific memory of Celia Dial Saxon, a graduate of the University of South Carolina and the first African American to be honored with a building name on the Columbia campus;

- [commissioning a monument](#) to memorialize the bravery of Robert G. Anderson, Henrie Monteith Treadwell, and James L. Solomon Jr., who desegregated the University of South Carolina when they registered for classes on September 11, 1963;
- [selecting artist Basil Watson](#) to render Anderson, Treadwell, and Solomon in the forms of heroic statues;
- [approving a historic contract for Head Coach of Women's Basketball Dawn Staley](#), thereby making her the highest-paid Black head coach in U.S. intercollegiate women's basketball;
- thanking Dr. Harris Pastides for returning to service in leadership of the USC System as its Interim President with a celebratory reception in honor of Dr. Pastides and Mrs. Patricia Moore-Pastides;
- presiding at the investitures of [USC Aiken Chancellor Daniel Heimmermann](#) and [USC Upstate Chancellor Bennie L. Harris](#);
- continuing Board governance reforms and reminding all Trustees of their fiduciary duties through an educational presentation about trusteeship from Dr. Belle Wheelan, President of the University's accrediting authority, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges;
- recognizing the contributions of our former colleagues: former Student Body President Alex Harrell, Trustee Emeritus J. Egerton Burroughs, Trustee Emeritus William C. Hubbard, Trustee Emeritus Toney J. Lister, former State Superintendent of Education Molly M. Spearman, Trustee Emeritus Eugene "Gene" P. Warr Jr., and Trustee Emeritus Mack I. Whittle, all of whom completed their service to the Board;
- fulfilling the Board's duty to provide continuing education for its members and to assess and revise the Board's Bylaws and policies;
- and governing a university enterprise that educates and trains future leaders, generates research, graduates students, and supports local economies to improve the lives of all South Carolinians.

We look forward to a promising 2023, which has already been marked by the Board's [extending to 2027 the employment contract of Head Football Coach Shane Beamer](#),

while approving one new contract and five contract amendments to bolster Beamer's coaching staff; presiding over [the ceremonial investiture of President Amiridis](#); convening for a two-day meeting that focused on the President's vision and strategy for the USC System; and welcoming to its membership Henry "Hank" L. Jolly Jr. (7th Judicial Circuit), Reid T. Sherard (13th Judicial Circuit), and State Superintendent of Education Ellen Weaver. We are mindful of the privilege and the responsibility of governing this fine University.

Forever To Thee,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Thad H. Westbrook". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "T".

Thad H. Westbrook  
Board Chair