

# COASTAL

COASTAL CAROLINA UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE



COASTAL IN  
**BLOOM**

Fall 2018 / Winter 2019



# From the PRESIDENT



## Focusing on Service

At a CCU leadership retreat six years ago, I announced to a group of 50 faculty and staff leaders that, together, we were about to lead a significant cultural shift at CCU. At the time, none of us knew exactly how it would take shape. But we knew this—CCU needed to become collectively focused on service excellence with student success as our ultimate goal.

That morning, I shared my vision and my intention: that this movement would ultimately become my presidential legacy.

We began work immediately on an initiative that would inspire our staff and faculty, empowering them with the knowledge and tools to positively change the way we serve our students and their families, our customers, and each other.

This year, we celebrated the five-year anniversaries of two innovative and successful programs that were born at that retreat. Feel the Teal and CHANT411 have served as catalysts for transforming our campus, and they are now key elements of the CCU brand.

Feel the Teal is a service excellence program designed to create a culture that makes everyone who steps on this campus feel welcome and know that this University cares about them.

During our Feel the Teal five-year anniversary celebration, employees were asked to share what the initiative means to them, and our people tell the story best.

- Katie Angulo, administrative assistant in campus and student life: “It’s important to feel the teal because we all are really here for the students. We have very genuine relationships with them. We support them. We have fun with them, and that makes us a family.”
- Steven Faulk, a fitness floor coordinator in University Recreation: “Feel the Teal has given students, faculty and staff the initiative to be that person who makes a difference.”
- Gene Ferich, facilities and grounds staff: “It’s the opportunity for everyone to come together and never have a ‘that’s not my job’ attitude.”

Shortly after Feel the Teal was launched, I realized we had a missing link in our service excellence efforts. We needed a one-stop operation that could help people find what they were looking for and get answers without having to go from place to place. We hired April Betsch to lead this initiative. The operation she and her team created, CHANT411, has far exceeded expectations. I even use it myself! The incredible feedback I am getting from parents and students proves that it has been beneficial for our student recruitment and retention.

Neil Raisman, the leading expert on academic customer service, recently called CHANT411 “the best student information center I have found on any campus.” Organizations from across the nation now look to CCU for guidance in launching service programs.

Feel the Teal and CHANT411 are now embedded in Coastal’s spirit and culture. I envision these positive programs as cornerstones for a lasting legacy of CCU service excellence.

David A. DeCenzo, President



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**COASTAL**  
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**CORRECTION:**

In the previous issue of the CCU Magazine, the name of the Young Alumnus of the Year, Sadara Shine, was misspelled. We regret the error.

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# Of NOTE

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## Rising above the Storm

*Coming back from Hurricane Florence*

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“The readiness is all,” said Hamlet. (Act 5, Scene 2)

When it comes to emergency situations like the one presented this fall by Hurricane Florence, Coastal Carolina University narrows its focus on one goal: preparedness.

Florence was a mammoth storm that brought unprecedented flooding to the Carolinas. Although downgraded to a tropical storm by the time it reached Horry County, Florence passed directly through CCU. Actual damage to the campus was fortunately minimal, but the storm and its aftermath forced the closing of the institution for an entire week and the suspension of classes for nearly three weeks.

CCU’s preparations for Florence were intensive, beginning long before the track of the storm was certain. The event gave CCU’s Office of Emergency Management the opportunity to implement an Emergency Operations Center (EOC) for the first time, bringing key personnel into one command center to direct the complex logistical details involved in dealing with a campuswide event of this size.

The safety of the CCU family was the first consideration. The decision was made on Sept. 9, as Florence was increasing in size and strength (Category 4), to cancel classes and close the institution beginning Tuesday, Sept. 11. Students had been notified in the days prior to this decision to have their evacuation plans ready, and the exodus proceeded smoothly.

The great majority of the students went home, either by car, airplane or train. Fifty-three residence hall students were

transported to Clemson University, accompanied by several CCU staff members. The HTC Center was the point of departure for students to catch transportation to the airport in Myrtle Beach or the Amtrak station in Florence, S.C.

“They’ve done a good job getting all the students out and making sure we all had a plan,” said Billy Ryder, a freshman marine science major, before he left to catch a flight home to Connecticut.

The campus itself suffered only minor damage from leaks and tree limbs, but the disastrous flooding in Conway and surrounding communities in the following days and weeks engulfed the roads CCU depends on for the delivery of food, fuel, and essential goods and services. The disruption of classes and the necessity to make up the lost time has presented unique challenges, which we are meeting in resourceful ways through technology and innovation.

Regretfully, the heaviest sorrow CCU has had to face has been the human consequences of loss and tragedy brought by the rising floodwaters—the highest in our history. A number of CCU faculty, staff, students and area alumni have been displaced by the flood and are now in the process of rebuilding their homes and lives.

“The Coastal Carolina family has pulled together magnificently throughout this ordeal,” said CCU President David A. DeCenzo. “From the expert guidance provided by our Emergency Management Team to the creative academic solutions offered by our faculty and staff, to the countless acts of support and compassion to those in need, CCU’s response has been nothing short of heroic, and I’ve never been prouder to be a Chanticleer.”

Anyone who would like to help members of the CCU community who have been adversely affected by the flooding is encouraged to give to a special Go Fund Me campaign ([gofundme.com/ccustrong](https://gofundme.com/ccustrong)) created by the Office for Philanthropy. Contributions received through this campaign will support the CCU Faculty and Staff Benevolence Fund, the Travis E. Overton and Jacob B. Rosiek Student Benevolence Fund, the Hyden Family Endowment for Students with Financial Need and the Deborah Conner Leadership Fund. Another option is to visit the [coastal.edu/givenow](https://coastal.edu/givenow) site and select the appropriate fund in the Gift Designation section of the form.



## Honor fraternity wins double honors

The Zeta Xi Chapter of Phi Sigma Pi National Honor Fraternity at Coastal Carolina University received the 2018 Joseph Torchia Outstanding Chapter Award and the Steven A. DiGuseppe Excellence in Administration Award in recognition of the chapter's achievements during the past year. Matthew Nicoletta (left), national president of the organization, presented the awards to CCU students Reagan Bond, Wyatt Davies '18, Shyanne Spivey and Alexa Bode at the national convention in Phoenix, Ariz., in July. Davies, who graduated in May 2018, was named Student Organization President of the Year.

## CCU student wins Rotary Global Grant to study conflict resolution in the UK



*Madison Scholar*

Coastal Carolina University student Madison Scholar has been awarded a Rotary Global Grant for up to \$50,000 to study in the United Kingdom during the 2019-2020 academic year. Scholar, a senior majoring in intelligence and national security studies from Marietta, Ga., will be pursuing a master's degree in peace and conflict prevention/resolution at the University of Manchester.

Joining the Coast Guard when she was 18, Scholar was at that time the youngest person to graduate from the police academy at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC) in Charleston, S.C. Scholar continues to be a member of the Coast Guard Reserve while studying full time for her degree at CCU.

Her studies will focus on the prevention and resolution of conflict through the reduction of drug trafficking.

"The Rotary Global Grant Scholarship gives me a chance to combine my academic knowledge and passion for leading through service toward a career aimed at making the world a safer place," said Scholar.

The scholarship is funded through Rotary International and administered through an annual competition in Rotary's District 7770. Applicants work through the CCU Rotary Global Grant Mentoring Committee, which includes a partnership between Myrtle Beach Rotary Club and Carolina Forest Sunrise Rotary Club, as well as CCU faculty and staff, to prepare an extensive written application. Scholar was sponsored by the Myrtle Beach Rotary Club.

CCU's most recent past student to be awarded the Rotary Global Grant and complete her studies abroad was Victoria Livinski '08, who studied in London in 2009-2010.

## CHANT411 earns kudos

CHANT411, the pioneering information service at CCU, turned 5 years old this past summer. The service, headquartered behind the circular desk in the Lib Jackson Student Union, is a central point of contact for anyone who needs a question answered about CCU.

Neil Raisman, a leading national expert on enrollment management, called CHANT411 "the best student information center I have found on any campus." Writing in his blog about service excellence in higher education, Raisman commented: "There is no question CHANT411 does not get or won't answer."

Since it was established in 2013, CHANT411 has fielded more than 200,000 questions, ranging from "Where's the Bursar's office?" to "How much was the tuition at Coastal when the college opened in 1954?"

Their busiest day yet was Monday, Aug. 20, 2018, the first day of class this semester, when the service fielded 1,354 questions via text, phone, email and social media.

The service is operated by the founding director April Betsch and two professional staff members, as well as a staff of 10-14 students. They are known to go beyond the call of duty, such as delivering crutches to a student in need and providing umbrellas on rainy days.

Begun at the behest of CCU President David A. DeCenzo in response to his vision of a one-stop "concierge" operation to handle all Coastal's consumer service needs, CHANT411 has far exceeded his original expectations.

There's only one question CHANT411 has been unable to answer: What is the origin of the birdhouses nailed to pine trees in front of the Smith Science Building? If anyone knows, contact the team at 843-234-3411 or email CHANT411@coastal.edu.



## New Ph.D. program will be offered in 2019

Coastal Carolina University's second doctoral program, the Interdisciplinary Ph.D. in Education, has received final approval and will be offered beginning in Spring 2019. The new doctoral program in education will offer three specialization areas: education leadership; higher education administration; and curriculum, instruction and assessment.

"This new program is built on the principle that educational knowledge is multifaceted and requires the ability to interrelate knowledge from varied disciplines," said Edward Jadallah, dean of the Spadoni College of Education. "This program will involve students in developing the breadth and depth of understandings, skills and dispositions that are relevant and meaningful for 21st century educators."

The program builds on the master's level education programs currently offered by the Spadoni College. According to Jadallah, the degree will also address issues related to the educator retention, recruitment and attrition problems facing our region, state and nation.

A total of 477 students are enrolled in graduate education programs at CCU, and approximately 90 percent of these students are teachers or administrators in school districts that partner with the Spadoni College (Horry, Georgetown, Dillon, Marion and Florence School Districts 1-5).

## Early Childhood Development and Literacy Center opens

A major new outreach endeavor of the Spadoni College of Education was inaugurated in August with the opening of the Early Childhood Development and Literacy Center.

Housed in the newly renovated Kingston Hall, the center serves up to 120 children who are 3 to 5 years old. The facility includes five literacy rooms, four classrooms and an outdoor playground. In addition to a full-time staff of five, CCU students majoring in elementary and early childhood education will take part in teaching the center's individualized curriculum, designed to provide project-based learning that focuses on the children's developmental stages.

According to Angela Huggins '91, who joined the CCU faculty as center director in July, the new center's curriculum, family-and-child focus, outdoor play, and teacher education opportunities are the main elements that set it apart from other schools.

The Peggy S. Shelley Early Childhood Lab School, recently established through a gift from the Shelley family of Garden City Beach, is also housed in the new center.

Center students are primarily the children of CCU faculty, staff and students, with a limited number of openings for children from the local community.



Jessica Hendrick instructs the first cohort of students.

## The Athenaeum Press wins awards



Student winners Kaitlyn Cegielski, Alexa Stress and Brooks Leibee.

Two student projects developed through CCU's Athenaeum Press won big in the 2018 District 3 American Advertising Awards (formerly the Addys) competition. *Homeless Are...*, an online website and companion book by a group of Swain Scholars about perceptions of homelessness in the local area, won the Best in Show student honors award. *At Low Tide: Voices of Sandy Island*, a book and a virtual reality documentary about the history and culture of one of South Carolina's most unique places, won a student gold award.

The Athenaeum Press is CCU's student-driven publishing lab that focuses on material that has local relevance developed through interdisciplinary collaboratives involving students and faculty.

"Both projects represent vital aspects of what the press is and does," said Alli Crandell, director of digital initiatives at CCU and project manager for the Athenaeum Press. "They're both multimedia, but one is more of a contemporary topic while the other is reflecting on our rich history. They exhibit the work of students tackling challenges in creative and innovative ways."



American Advertising Awards student gold award winner: *At Low Tide: Voices of Sandy Island*.



## Relay for Life at CCU: \$1 million closer to a cure

Twelve years, thousands of volunteers, countless hugs, tears and laughs, and an unwavering dedication to defeating cancer. Add all that up, and you get an organization that has raised \$1 million since 2006 for the American Cancer Society.

Two days ahead of its annual Relay For Life event this past spring, the Coastal Carolina University student-run chapter of Colleges Against Cancer (CAC) reached the million-dollar mark of lifetime funds raised.

Debbie Conner, vice president for student engagement at CCU, says reaching the million-dollar mark is a significant accomplishment for CCU's Relay for Life, and she attributes it to the collaborative and engaging nature of the event.

The students in CAC plan the event months in advance, publicize it, build fundraising teams, set goals, achieve them, and share stories along the way with others whose lives have been affected by cancer. During the 12-hour event, teams walk CCU's teal track. Each team always has a member actively walking the track throughout the event to signify that cancer never sleeps.

Individuals can also raise money for the cause. Travis Overton, CCU's chief of staff, holds an event at Rotelli restaurant near CCU every year to raise money for Relay for Life, in honor of his mother. He raised more than \$3,500 this year.

## CCU emotional health awareness efforts raise more than \$17,000

The 2018 Out of the Darkness Campus Walk for the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention at CCU raised \$17,270, the most of any other participating university in South Carolina, including the University of South Carolina (\$12,034) and Clemson (\$7,095).

Coastal has been involved with this effort for only four years, but has raised a total of more than \$35,000 overall. More than 300 people registered to walk for this year's event, held in March, another record. This year was the first time the event had corporate sponsors in Lighthouse Behavioral Health Hospital of Conway and Beachside Electrical Design LLC of Myrtle Beach.

"It's important to get people talking about mental health issues, and [the walk] is one way that we can educate and start a conversation," said Chris Donevant-Haines, the assistant director of Wellness Outreach and primary organizer of the event.

CCU has also implemented online resources for student emotional health and wellness and counseling services, including Therapist Assisted Online (TAO) and ULifeline.



### CCU investigator named nation's top campus officer

Charles Kessler, an investigator with Coastal Carolina University's Department of Public Safety (DPS), was named 2018 Officer of the Year by the National Association of Campus Safety Administrators (NACSA). The award was presented to him in July at NACSA's annual conference in Orlando, Fla.

Kessler has been with CCU DPS since October 2014 after a stint with the Conway Police Department. He served in the military for eight years after graduating from Carolina Forest High School in 2005, and was deployed several times before retiring in 2013 to pursue his law enforcement career.

"I am honored," Kessler said. "It feels great for my work to be recognized. Being in the spotlight is not something I particularly enjoy, so this is awesome and very uncomfortable at the same time."

Since he became a police officer, ridding the community of illicit narcotics has become Kessler's personal mission. During his military service, he says he lost more fellow soldiers to narcotics abuse related to PTSD than to enemy combatants. He was asked to be part of a narcotics unit that operated in the Horry County area in 2016, which he says resulted in "a vast amount of training, knowledge and experience that greatly enhanced my abilities as an investigator specializing in narcotics."

Kessler's supervisor, Lt. Matthew Crawford, nominated him for the award. Agencies from across America submitted applications to be considered for the awards. Kessler was unanimously selected from the pool of finalists.





by Nicole Pippo



**CULTIVATING A BEAUTIFUL CAMPUS**



*Flower power: Greenhouse manager John Brong propagates thousands of plants for the CCU campus.*

**W**hen you ask students why they decided to attend Coastal Carolina University, they often cite the beauty of the campus.

“My high school nurse told me her daughter came here,” said Kiki Sirett, a 2018 communication graduate from Allentown, Pa. “She wouldn’t stop bragging about how beautiful the campus is, and I can’t say she was wrong! I cried at every college visit I went on, except when I visited CCU. It had this amazing vibe, and the campus was beautiful.”

“Coastal’s campus is my favorite feature,” said Trevor Carver, a senior marine science major from Crofton, Md. “The campus is beautiful and even though school is stressful, there are many places to relax and get away from the hustle and bustle.”

“I never get tired of walking through our campus because it is just so pretty,” said Sarina Stasi, a recent business graduate from Pine Bush, N.Y.

No matter the season, the Coastal campus is unquestionably an attractive place. Columned brick buildings are set among paths with flowering plants and trees under a canopy of pines and live oaks. In recent years, CCU has twice been named one of the top 30 Most Beautiful Coastal College Campuses by Best Value Schools.

The landscaping that makes CCU stand out from other campuses takes hard work and an unusual degree of dedication. The University Grounds department is responsible for all the trees, plants and flowers that line the courtyards, lawns and sidewalks of CCU.

Each of the 32 members of the grounds staff plays a role in creating and maintaining CCU’s landscape. They plant around 40,000 annual flowers a year—approximately 20,000 annuals are planted each fall and another 20,000 each spring. In the summer when temperatures soar, grounds staff members go through 1,000 gallons of water a day to keep the plants healthy.



BEING A STUDENT WORKER [AT THE GREENHOUSE] WAS DEFINITELY THE BEST JOB I HAD, AND IT REALLY MADE MY TIME AT COASTAL UNIQUE AND SPECIAL.”

- Shannon Sweeney '18  
marine science graduate



## HOMEGROWN

Every plant in every flowerbed and potted arrangement on campus was homegrown on site—a rarity for most university landscaping departments. The plants begin their lives as seeds or cuttings in the greenhouse located near Teal Hall and the HTC Center. While CCU has had greenhouses for many years, the landscaping program took a major leap forward seven years ago when the University decided to replace the small greenhouse that was located behind the old admissions building. The large new greenhouse was built to handle the additional horticulture.

Growing the plants is just the beginning. It then takes teams of grounds people to haul the plants out to every edge of CCU’s 633-acre campus, plant them and keep them healthy through the seasons.

There is a sense of comradery among the grounds staff, and they appreciate each other. “They like to give credit to the greenhouse, but if it wasn’t for them planting it, it wouldn’t get done,” said greenhouse manager John Brong.

Assistant grounds superintendent James Mills is in charge of five crews. Each grounds person is responsible for designing, planting, fertilizing and maintaining the plants in an area of campus that they “own.”

“We get compliments all the time,” said Mills. “Somebody will stop me and tell me how nice it looks, and I give the kudos to my guys because they’re the ones doing [the landscaping].”

Having each person in control of their own area fuels friendly competition. A few years ago, Brong had the campus sign shop make a trophy to give to the employee who created the best-looking area.

Grounds crew leader Ken Gawler says he loves his job because the “immediate impact” of the flowers he plants is rewarding.

Mike Hodges, a member of the grounds crew, has planted some 200,000 plants since he started working for CCU 10 years ago. In May 2018, for example, Hodges planted 1,400 pentas, a colorful annual flower, in a curving pattern on both sides of the brick

**Garden path:** Rows of crepe myrtles brighten the campus each summer.





THE CAMPUS IS BEAUTIFUL AND EVEN THOUGH SCHOOL IS STRESSFUL, THERE ARE MANY PLACES TO RELAX AND GET AWAY FROM THE HUSTLE AND BUSTLE.”

-Trevor Carver  
senior, marine science



walkway leading to the Atheneum.

“A big part of our job is problem-solving, trying to find out what is beneficial or harmful in particular growing conditions,” said Hodges. “We’re at the mercy of the weather, so we are always working to keep the plants looking their best.”

Grounds staff has help from about seven student workers during the academic year. Shannon Sweeney, who graduated from CCU in May 2018, worked with Brong at the greenhouse for three and a half years. A marine science major, she was genuinely interested in learning about the science of horticulture.

“John was the best boss I ever had,” said Sweeney. “He really cared about explaining to me what he was doing. Everything I know about plants I learned from him.”

Sweeney valued the hands-on experience, which included making flower arrangements for CCU’s special events.

“Being a student worker [at the greenhouse] was definitely the best job I had, and it really made my time at Coastal unique and special,” she said. “It was a privilege to work there.”



(Top) CCU student worker Jalen Carr prepares a tray of begonias for planting on campus. (middle) The Singleton Building displays the skills of the University grounds staff. (bottom) Wayne Cooper, a CCU grounds crew leader, adds mulch to a winter flower bed.



**Pollination:** *Campus blossoms provide a feast for bees and other important pollinators.*

## ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

Campus horticulture makes a significant impact on CCU's sustainability efforts. According to James Luken, associate provost of graduate studies and professor of biology, the fact that there are still areas on campus with preserved forests is unique because most universities would remove trees to make room for buildings.

Luken says that the greenhouse's method of propagation saves CCU money. Propagation is an inexpensive way to produce clones of plants from existing ones, which means CCU always has a supply of beautiful plants and flowers.

The grounds staff works closely with Sustain Coastal, the University's recycling and sustainability initiative, to compost campus waste. "[Used] flowers are piled up over at the greenhouse and over time we let them [break down]," said grounds superintendent Tim Shank. Then it can be made into soil and used on campus.

Sustainability coordinator Jeremy Monday says that more than 200 tons of food scraps from Hicks Dining Hall, Chauncey's Choice, CINO Grille and University Place Dining Hall have been processed since the composting initiative began in August 2015. CCU partners with a food waste hauling company called SMART

Recycling, which transports the scraps to the Horry County Solid Waste Authority, where the material is converted into soil for flowerbeds around campus.

"Composting is certainly better than [the material] going to a landfill and creating methane gas," said Monday.

Other duties that CCU's grounds services crews handle include grass and tree care, pesticide control and setting up floral arrangements for CCU's special events.

Brong is proud that CCU made it on the Most Beautiful Coastal College Campuses list, but he has even higher hopes. "My goal is for CCU is to be the No. 1 campus in the nation as far as beauty." ■

*Nicole Pippo is a senior communication major and a student writer in the Office of University Communication.*



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# GOING SOLAR

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CCU student Solar Ambassadors are lighting the way to a more sustainable future.

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by Caroline P. Rohr



The process of growth is a cyclical one, whether it's a plant's life cycle or one person's inspiration that blossoms into something that inspires many. Regardless of its form or its progression, growth doesn't happen alone, and, in the case of the Solar Ambassador program at Coastal Carolina University, it starts with a little sunshine.

The Solar Ambassador program launched at CCU in 2015, but the seed was planted earlier. The faculty member behind the program, Pamela Martin, came to Coastal in 1999 with a focus on energy, sustainable development and environmental politics. Part of her research has been focused on fossil fuels and oil extraction, specifically in the Amazon and on the Galapagos Islands, but a project she developed with CCU's Athenaeum Press shifted her trajectory.

In 2014, the Press, CCU's student-run publishing lab, took on a project entitled *Powering a New South*, which involved interviewing individuals in the local community to find sustainable solutions to current energy problems. Martin joined Alli Crandell, the

**Here Comes the Sun:** (right) *Solar ambassadors promote sustainable energy at an event on Prince Lawn.* (left to right) *Derek Bussey, Cat Sweeney, Gabriella Dudley, Kelly Shelton, Maria Karahalios, Cassandra Ratliff, Kathryn Curran and Lainey Lewis.*



Cat Sweeney and Shani Caplan-Chernoff



Photos by Maria Karahalios



**THE SOLAR AMBASSADOR PROGRAM AT COASTAL BECAME OUR CHANCE TO REALLY MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THIS COMMUNITY.”**

**- Cassandra Ratliff**

director of digital initiatives in the Edwards College of Humanities and Fine Arts, and a team of more than a dozen students to study the possibilities that renewable resources could bring to the region.

Many people living along the Carolina coastline were excited and optimistic about renewable energy around that time; Act 236, the Distributed Energy Resource Program Act, had recently been signed into law in South Carolina. This act authorized solar leasing, established guidelines for net energy metering, and provided incentives to utilities that procure renewable energy. Since the act

became law, the number of solar installations in the state has increased by 1,600 percent, according to solar.sc.gov.

During their interviews, however, Martin and the students heard troubling stories about how inaccessible renewable energy was to people in low-income communities.

One of those stories, from a CCU student, has stuck with Martin ever since. After the student's father passed away, keeping the family afloat fell on his shoulders, and he struggled to maintain his schoolwork and keep the lights on at home.

“Having your lights turned off, it's the worst thing because you have to wash in cold water and you have to use candles at night time to see, and you can't do any schoolwork 'cause there's no power and it just cut you off from everything, [even] basic necessities like cooking,” Brandon Haynes said during his



Photos by Maria Karahalios



**WHILE CCU HAS ITS OWN TEAM, WE ARE SUPPOSED TO SUPPORT ALL THE TEAMS AND WORK TOGETHER. THAT'S HOW WE SPREAD SOLAR TO NONPROFITS ACROSS THE U.S.” - Pam Martin**

interview with the Press. “I had to cook on the little gas burner hot plate. It was just tough. You can’t imagine just living in a house two or three weeks with no lights.”

Martin felt inspired to do something more. A colleague told her about a college program run by the solar seed nonprofit organization RE-volv in San Francisco, Calif., and she decided to send out an email to the entire student body in 2015 to gauge interest in a solar project at CCU. It was a calculated risk: Admission to RE-volv’s solar ambassador program is via a competitive application process, one the students themselves would have to complete. Acceptance was far from guaranteed.

“Ten students responded to that one email,” she said. “Ten students showed up to the first meeting. And 10 students became the first cohort of Solar Ambassadors at Coastal Carolina University.”

CCU soon became one of seven universities in the nation—and the only one in the South at that time—to be accepted into the program.

“We have a unique situation as a public, comprehensive university, and we did not come to this project with massive

quantities of funding,” said Martin. “This program at CCU is solely based on student initiative and RE-volv support.”

The Solar Ambassador program demands a high level of commitment. The full-year, six-credit program requires a minimum of one hour of work outside the classroom weekly. Martin said it’s about as hands-on as a class can get.

Catherine Sweeney and Cassandra Ratliff are two members of the original cohort of Solar Ambassadors. Sweeney is an interdisciplinary studies major graduating in December 2018. Ratliff, who graduated in 2017 with a degree in interdisciplinary studies, had worked on the *Powering a New South* project.

“Through that research, I quickly learned that solar energy would significantly increase the quality of life of all, especially those who could not afford it,” Ratliff said. “The Solar Ambassador program at Coastal became our chance to really make a difference in this community.”

Sweeney was originally a marine science major uncertain of what direction she wanted to take. She saw the Solar Ambassador program as an opportunity to try something new and perhaps find a sense of objective.

She found it.



**Solar Utopia:** In December 2016, CCU professor Pam Martin (left) and the Solar Ambassadors visited the solar power installation at Kauai, Hawaii, and met with representatives there about plans to operate totally on renewable energy by 2045.

“Through working with the Solar Ambassadors, I have an internship with the United Nations Youth Corps, and it’s helped guide me in the direction of sustainability,” she said. “I have a job with a solar company now. I want to go into education to guide others toward sustainable development. It’s the way we have to move if we’re going to preserve the way we live.”

Ratliff and Sweeney both work in the marketing department at Carolina Energy Conservation, a local solar company. As Solar Ambassadors, they were able to get hands-on experience in every aspect of the solar industry, from policy and research to marketing and installations.

The centerpoint of the partnership with RE-volv requires the Solar Ambassador teams to commit to finding a nonprofit that is interested in having solar panels installed on its facility and seeing the entire process through to completion. The process involves researching solar policies, local energy providers and eligible nonprofits; educating the nonprofits on the benefits of solar and the solar seed fund; marketing and fundraising, and much more.

RE-volv’s solar seed fund operates on the pay-it-forward model. When one nonprofit goes solar, the upfront costs to pay for that project come from the solar seed fund. The nonprofit’s

lease payments go back into the solar seed fund, which finances solar projects for other nonprofits.

The first group of Solar Ambassadors learned a lot in the process of fulfilling their commitment. As part of the program, RE-volv requires a leader from each college team to attend an intensive training session in California, and the team leaders take that knowledge back to their home teams.

“While CCU has its own team, we are supposed to support all the teams and work together. That’s how we spread solar to nonprofits across the U.S.,” said Martin.

To get the team motivated and to show them the “utopia of solar,” Martin led a winter break trip in 2016 to Kauai, Hawaii, an area that has resolved to operate totally on renewable energy by 2045. The Kauai Utility Cooperative and the mayor of Kauai sponsored the trip so the team could learn about their solar policy and think of ways to implement similar policies in South Carolina. Once they returned from Hawaii, they were better equipped with the knowledge and resources they needed to start the process of putting solar panels on a local nonprofit.

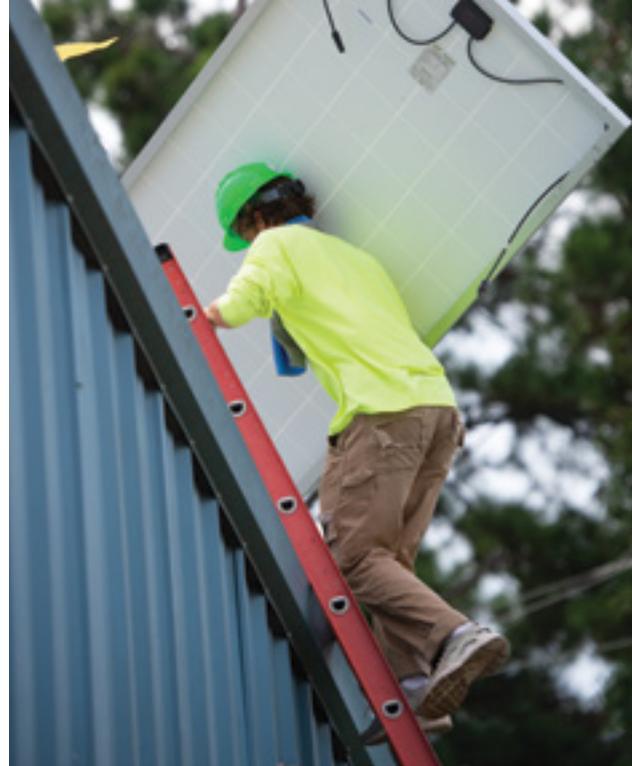
To supplement all the knowledge and experience they were gaining in policy, marketing and research, Martin planned a spring break trip to Denver in 2018 to expose the ambassadors to the physical side of the industry—design and installation. During that trip, the students were able to install solar panels on two homes in low-income communities.

For spring break 2019, Martin plans to bring North Carolina’s state mobile solar training unit to CCU so the students will be trained at the initial level as North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners (NABCEP). Martin said this training is the solar industry’s professional credential that will enable the students to get their foot in the door with a potential employer after they graduate.

“When I tell professionals that we train students at the initial level of NABCEP training, they can’t believe it,” Martin said. “Interestingly enough, many people who currently work in the industry don’t have that certification because of the cost. We are fortunate to have experiential learning funds supporting us.”

The ambassadors’ initial plan to put solar on a homeless shelter fell through in early 2017 due to reasons beyond their control, but they regrouped with VFW Post 10804 in Little River, raising





\$57,000 in Spring 2018 for the install. That project ended up being RE-volv's largest fundraising project to date.

The students chose the VFW Post in Little River as the target for their next solar project for two important reasons.

"Veterans are an important part of our community in Horry County," said Martin. "They contribute a lot to our campus, and we value their service to our country. The students also made a smart choice by analyzing energy policy and utility rates. Horry Electric has a program called net metering in which any excess energy is paid for by the utility. The students made a strategic choice to choose an organization that would make good economic sense and that is near and dear to their hearts."

The lease agreement with VFW Post 10804 was signed in February 2018, and fundraising began immediately after that. The team had around two months to raise \$57,000, but they got a welcome assist from the Leonardo DiCaprio Foundation, which agreed to sponsor 50 percent of the project. They reached their goal in April, and the solar panels were installed on the VFW

Post in mid-August, completing the first project of the first Solar Ambassador team at CCU.

"After every successful project, Solar Ambassador teams have more confidence in being able to help another nonprofit in the community," said Shani Caplan-Chernoff, a senior interdisciplinary studies major and the 2017-2018 project lead. "The more projects we collectively complete, the easier it is going to get for future teams through the solar seed fund."

So what started as a seed of a program at CCU will now be planting seeds for the growth of the solar industry throughout the community.

"We want this program to get bigger," said Sweeney. "We hope other VFWs want solar panels, too, and that we can do this throughout Horry and Georgetown counties."

"I think it's wonderfully innovative," said Margo Sheridan, chair of the house committee at Post 10804. "I hope we are a model for other nonprofits in South Carolina. We have VFW posts in Georgetown, Marion County and Florence."



Sheridan said she expects to see appreciable savings from the solar panels, beyond the predicted 15 percent savings overall. The VFW operates out of a large building off Highway 15 in Little River and serves more than 700 members.

With one project under their belts and after being accepted as a Solar Ambassador program with RE-volv for the 2018-2019 year, the CCU team had already started working on the next installation project before the sun even shone on the VFW panels. Two nonprofits in Georgetown County reached out to the team in late Spring 2018 with questions about how they could get solar installed on their facilities, and work with those organizations has begun.

As Ratliff says, they have to keep the momentum going and growing by “saving the world, one rooftop at a time.” ■

**In a New Light:** Thanks to the Solar Ambassadors, the VFW Post in Little River is now a solar facility. Shani Caplan-Chernoff (above left) was on hand for the installation of the solar panels (center photos). Professor Pam Martin (above right) spoke at the ceremony before the ribbon cutting (lower right) on Oct. 13.



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# SERIOUS BUSINESS

Real Money. Real Investments. Real Experience.



**Capstone moment:** Members of the first CCU Student Investment Committee are (left to right) Matthew Scelfo, Christian Cardelli, Nicole Kelly, Cole Allen, Christian Adams, Myles Anderson, Clarissa Conover, Matthew Haman and Jacob Larsen.

**F**rom theory to practice. From play money to hard cash. The students in Finance 492, the capstone class in portfolio management for finance majors in the E. Craig Wall Sr. College of Business Administration, took CCU's experiential learning concept to a bold new level last semester through the Gerald Boyles Student Investment Fund.

The fund was established in 2004 by revered CCU business professor Gerald V. Boyles, who wanted to give students the opportunity to apply their classroom knowledge of financial markets by using real money to make real investments. Boyles, who retired in 2007, was known throughout his long tenure for mentoring and inspiring business students to pursue professional

careers in finance and investing.

For the Spring 2018 capstone class, led by professor John Mortimer, the management of the Boyles Fund was completely redesigned. "The class has changed its focus from stock selection to portfolio management," said Mortimer. "This was the first year that assets of the fund have been reinvested."

The Boyles Fund's "client" is a CCU endowment that will eventually provide scholarships for finance students and other support for the Wall College's Department of Finance and Economics. These funds are administered through the Coastal Educational Foundation, which manages the University's endowment.



**Leader and mentor:** *CCU business professor John Mortimer redesigned the Boyles Fund project and guided the Student Investment Committee.*

The class of 10 students started out in three teams, but soon found that it was more productive to come together as one group called the Student Investment Committee. They began the semester creating an investment policy statement (IPS) to guide their investing strategy. Led by team captain Christian Adams, each student was responsible for researching specific aspects of the portfolio.

“Drawing on knowledge we gained from previous finance classes we had taken, we developed an asset allocation model in which we strived to balance high yield and low risk,” said Adams, who earned bachelor’s degrees in both finance and economics in three years, and also played on the Chanticleer basketball team. He graduated in May 2018, summa cum laude, and is now an investment banking analyst with Stephens Inc., a privately held financial services firm in Little Rock, Ark.

## ▲ BUILDING A PORTFOLIO

The students conducted their analysis at a jittery moment in America’s financial markets. The “Trump Bump” had reached its peak at the end of January 2018, with the Dow Jones Industrial Average hitting its all-time high of 26,616 points on Jan. 26. But in the first week of February, as the class was deep into the intricate process of weighing risk versus return, the Dow fell more than 2,000 points—including the worst single-day drop in its history (1,175 points on Monday, Feb. 5).

“We began with a great sense of trepidation about investing in this market,” said Mortimer, who joined the Wall College faculty in 2009. “Our concern was ultimately offset, however, by new tax policies that brought a stabilizing effect.”

Although his primary area of scholarship is accounting, Mortimer earned his bachelor’s degree in finance, and one of his favorite areas of research is in earnings management. He is a retired lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army and served on active duty in Iraq in 2006 and 2007. He was the director of finance for the multinational Strategic Command-Iraq’s Ministry of Interior and was awarded a Bronze Star for creating and executing its \$3.4 billion budget.

For three months, the team did its work assiduously, analyzing stock options and bond issues in exacting detail and factoring in a prodigious mass of market data on volatility, interest rates, labor market predictors, inflation projections, consumer sentiment and other relevant economic indicators. They reviewed Federal Reserve policies, followed the professional conduct code of ethics and standards set by the CFA (Chartered Financial Analyst) Institute, and studied the institute’s capital market expectations.

According to Adams, the class made a total of 2,106 calculations in the process of selecting its final portfolio of 26

**Expert advice:** *After the formal presentation, the students responded to questions from a distinguished panel of business people, including (left to right) Joe Moglia, chairman of TD Ameritrade; Barbara Ritter, dean of the Wall College of Business; and Dennis Edwards, chair of CCU’s Department of Finance and Economics.*





**We probably wouldn't have invested so carefully or learned as much if we had been using play money instead of real money. Creating an IPS and building a portfolio from scratch has been a learning experience that we can all apply in our future careers."**

*-Christian Adams '18  
Student Investment Committee leader*

stocks and bonds. "We developed a diversified portfolio that was built to withstand normal market conditions," he said, "with 54 percent allocated to equities, 36 percent in fixed-income assets and 10 percent in real assets. We didn't want to be top-heavy in any one sector, and we stipulated that no single investment company can manage more than 30 percent of the fund's total assets."

On April 3, Mortimer invested \$65,000 according to the class' plan. As the fund grows, it will become endowed at \$100,000, at which point funds will be dispersed for scholarships and other programs of the Department of Finance and Economics.



## ▲ MEETING OF THE BOARD

The class gathered in the Wall boardroom on April 26 to make a formal presentation of its portfolio to the investment advisory board that was created to help guide the Boyles Fund. The board is composed of eight prominent investment professionals as well as select Wall College faculty and staff members. The meeting was also attended by other noted members of the business community.

A great deal would be riding on this presentation by the students. The judgment of the board could spell the success or failure of their semester-long effort. The group started rehearsing at 8 p.m. on the evening before the meeting and worked nonstop until 3 a.m.

At 4 p.m. the next day, dressed in their best business attire, the class members, led by Adams, took turns explaining their strategy in detail. The board members grilled the students on their investment rationale. One of the distinguished guests at the meeting, CCU head football coach and TD Ameritrade chairman Joe Moglia, peppered them with questions. Stovall Witte, CEO of the Coastal Educational Foundation, was keenly interested in the direction the students had taken with funds that are a part of CCU's endowment.

**Strategy session:** *Investment advisory board vice president Steven Starnes of Merrill Lynch said the Student Investment Committee produced "not just a student project, but a world-class portfolio."*

At the conclusion of the meeting, the board was unanimous in its approval of the students' work. Moglia commended the students for keeping a close watch on management expenses, "because costs eat into the returns," he said.

"These kids have created not just a student project, but a world-class portfolio," said board vice president Steven Starnes of Merrill Lynch.

"It's been an extreme learning curve for all of us," Adams said on behalf of his team. "We probably wouldn't have invested so carefully or learned as much if we had been using play money instead of real money. Creating an IPS and building a portfolio from scratch has been a learning experience that we can all apply in our future careers."

Mortimer is extremely proud of his first class of Boyles Fund investors. "They did a great job," he said. "I'm not sure I could have done better. The entire team performed superbly, and in my 25 years in education, Christian Adams is one of the top five students I have had the privilege of teaching."

The capstone course is designed so that each class of students can build their own portfolio each year and thus grow the fund.

"The important thing to me," said Mortimer, "is that this project is carrying on the tradition of Gerald Boyles—producing strong, skilled, professional investors." ■



**Long-term dividends:** Nicole Kelly '18, shown here at the portfolio presentation, graduated magna cum laude in May and is already working as a business management analyst with Northrop Grumman.



## INVESTMENT ADVISORY BOARD

### EXTERNAL ADVISERS:

**Christopher St. John '01, '09**

*Carolina Wealth Advisors  
—President of the Advisory Board*

**Steven Sisney**

*Sisney Capital  
—Wall College Board of Visitors*

**Steven Starnes**

*Starnes Group-Merrill Lynch  
—Vice President of the  
Advisory Board*

### ADMINISTRATORS:

**Dennis Edwards**

*Chair of the Department of  
Finance and Economics,  
Wall College of Business*

**Barbara Ritter**

*Dean, Wall College of Business*

**W. Stovall Witte Jr.**

*CEO, Coastal Educational Foundation*

### CO-CHAIR ADVISERS:

**Alicia Moorhead '10**

*Coastal Educational Foundation*

**John Mortimer**

*Professor of Accounting*



## ▲ GERALD BOYLES



Gerald Boyles

Gerald "Gerry" Boyles, Distinguished Professor Emeritus, retired from Coastal Carolina University in June 2007. Prior to joining the Coastal family in 1973, Boyles was a finance instructor at the University of South Carolina and an assistant professor of finance at Old Dominion University. He earned a Ph.D. from the University of South Carolina. During his long and productive tenure at Coastal Carolina, Boyles was an associate professor of finance and the first chair of the business division. He also served as dean of the Wall School of Business in 1979-1980, was a finalist for the Distinguished Teaching Award for several years in a row, and was the first recipient of the William J. Baxley Jr. Applied Business Professorship in 2001, which was awarded to him for his teaching ability, character, academic achievement and ability to relate "real world" experiences into the classroom.

# AMAZON

ADVENTURE



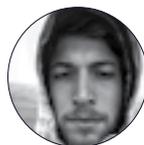
SHIPBOARD RESEARCH  
OFF THE COAST OF BRAZIL



The month of May 2018 marked a voyage of scientific exploration for two Coastal Carolina University students, **Elana Ames** and **Alec Villafana**, who were part of a four-week research cruise off the coast of Brazil. They participated in a study on nitrogen fixation near the mouth of the Amazon River, funded jointly by Georgia Tech and the National Science Foundation.



**Elana Ames**, a graduate student in CCU's coastal marine and wetland studies program, focused on analyzing water samples for unique isotope traces in the photoplankton located in the "plume," the area where the Amazon pours fresh-water into the Atlantic. The goal of the project is to better understand the chemical phenomenon called nitrogen fixation, whereby nitrogen in the atmosphere is converted to other organic compounds that promote plant production.



**Alec Villafana**, a junior marine science major, assisted Ames and the crew and documented the research process, producing an informative and entertaining blog of the journey from the research vessel Endeavor, which he updated several times a week on [coastal.edu/coastal-now/amazonadventure](http://coastal.edu/coastal-now/amazonadventure).

These are highlights from his record of an amazing May!

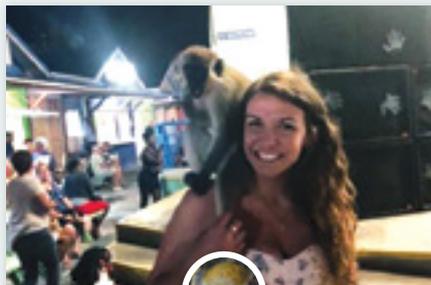
### MAY 3 ...



After leaving at 7 a.m. from Myrtle Beach International Airport, we finally arrived to our hotel in Barbados at 11:30 p.m. We decided to take a trip into downtown, where I purchased a fish sandwich from a road vendor. I did not make it to bed until 3 a.m. (which is a normal bedtime for the locals).



### MAY 4 ...



Once we dropped our bags off at the ship, we headed to Oistins, where there was a fish fry festival going on. The spot was crazy! There were people dancing, blasting music, playing instruments and walking around with monkeys on their back. Elana and I each had the flying fish, which was delicious, but it was the fried red snapper that took the prize. After a long day/night of fun, we made our way back to the ship.



### MAY 5 ...



**SET-UP DAY!** After a long, hot, sweaty sleep, I woke up at 8 a.m. The ship was full of people setting up, which looked to be hours of work. I made my way to the lab to help set up our RaDeCC [Radium Delayed Coincidence Counter] machine, which counts the radium isotopes in the water. Because radium has a known decay rate, it allows us to predict the "age" of the water it resides in.



## MAY 6 ...



### DAY ONE.

What started off as a smooth trip quickly became a never-ending roller coaster. [Many] of the scientists on board have been plagued with seasickness. I was the first one to vomit. Since we left, about five of us have been walking around with little green buckets that [chief scientist] Joe Montoya of Georgia Tech gave us.

We are heading to the center of the plume. Our first stop will be when we exit Bajan waters and enter international waters. We will perform a "shakedown cast" to see exactly how the CTD (conductivity, temperature, depth) works. Until then, you can find me in bed with my little green bucket.



## MAY 7 ...



We made our first stop at 1300 as we entered international waters, where we dropped the CTD. The CTD will allow us to collect water samples at any depth and give us a conductivity, temperature, depth and salinity reading as it descends. Elana and I will be using these water samples as data.



## MAY 8 ...



Today, I woke up in time for breakfast at 0730, and started my day with some nice acidic food for the first time. We are currently in transit to station three. Each stop counts as a station. While in transit, Elana and I have been targeting to take underway samples every hour. An underway sample is [taken] from a tube under the boat as we move.



## MAY 9 ...



We have been rocking back and forth at station three since about 1400 yesterday. Worked till 0300 last night. The salinity is hovering around 32 psu, which is relatively "fresh." This tells us we are within the freshwater plume. I was responsible with helping Justin Blancher deploy his snow cam, which tells us where particulate matter is within the water column. Justin is a graduate student at the University of Southern Mississippi.



## MAY 13 ...



We have entered French Guyana waters and are exiting the plume. We had a couple of brief stops again to deploy three CTD casts and a ring net cast. We have recently found out that we will see land in the coming days. My day ended with the graveyard shift for sampling.



## MAY 14 ...



### THE PLUME IS AMONG US.

The water has turned from a clear oceanic blue color to a turbid, green color. The salinity has dramatically decreased, and we are about 4 degrees from the equator. It is safe to say that we have found the core of the plume. Our data has dramatically spiked, and we are happy with the results so far. We are about 10-15 nautical miles from the French Guyana coast but have yet to [see land].



A package was delivered to us by a small boat. We all gathered around the bridge to watch as if we had found life on another planet.”

—Alec Villafana

## MAY 16 ...



While pulling the sediment trap in this morning, the rope got caught in the propeller. Justin sent a GoPro down into the water to get a clearer image of the problem. It was cool seeing the crew and scientists work together to resolve the issue. We were able to shake loose the floats and clear the propeller. We are happy that everything is now back to normal.



## MAY 17 ...



**LAND HO!** A package was delivered to us by a small boat. We all gathered around the bridge to watch as if we had found life on another planet. There is something really nice about seeing a new face when you've seen the same 30 people every day, all day. We are now transiting out of plume water and into oceanic water where we can get contrast samples.



## MAY 19 ...



We are en route to retrieve Professor Ajit Subramaniam's equipment, the BONO (Biogeochemical Oceanographic Nitrate Observer), from the ocean. Ajit is a microbial oceanographer at Lamont Doherty Earth Observatory of Columbia University. He is trying to understand what type of phytoplankton are found in different places and why they grow there.





I have learned so much, and I wouldn't trade this experience for anything."

—Alec Villafana

**MAY 20 . . .**



**FEELING THE PRESSURE.**

We are now transiting to our next station, where we will send a CTD 1,900 meters deep. Everyone has been working on coloring in a Styrofoam cup to send down with CTD. The pressure will crush the cup into a miniature version of itself. Elana even designed a CCU cup.



**MAY 22 . . .**

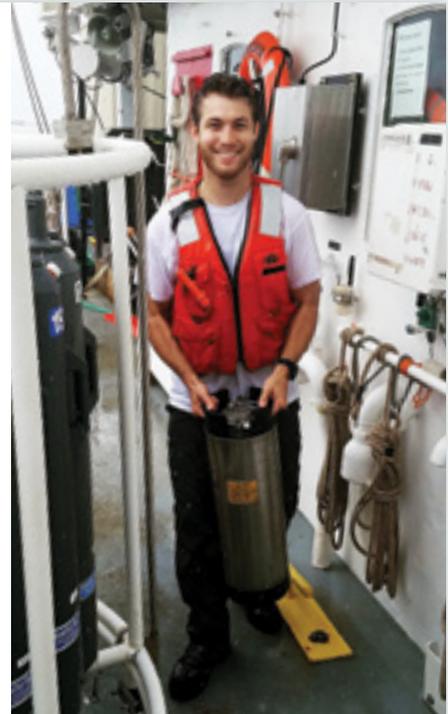


Once we arrived in Barbados for a quick tune up, no one could wait to get off the ship. We were cleared by customs around 1100 and by the captain after lunch. Me being the millennial that I am, I immediately got to a good Wi-Fi spot and updated myself with the outside world. Tomorrow, science will begin again!



**MAY 23 . . .**

We are currently transiting east toward older plume water. We hope to find Diatom Diazotroph Association (DDA) blooms in these locations. DDAs have been used to understand the anomalous feature of the Amazon River plume. The plume acts as a sink for carbon when most river plumes act as a source for carbon entering the ocean. DDAs are composed of diatoms with cyanobacteria living within them. Cyanobacteria fix nitrogen from N<sub>2</sub> to biologically accessible nitrogen, which increases the limiting nitrogen for diatoms. This in turn will decrease the flux of carbon down the water column because of more photosynthesis.



## MAY 26 ...



At Station 31, we deployed a sediment trap to gather organic mass in older plume water. We loaded multiple tubes with high saline waters (very dense compared to the oceanic water) to create a brine effect. When the tubes enter the water, the denser water will not mix with oceanic water and will remain in the tubes. Any organic matter floating over the tubes will be trapped in the dense water.



## MAY 28 ...

Happy 23rd birthday, Elana! We started the day off with a couple of CTD casts and ended the day with a 2000m cast. In between, we recovered the Mocness [a high-tech sampling net], which traps zooplankton of various sizes. We are now transiting to our final station. Some of the crew joined in to wish Elana a happy birthday after dinner by singing and playing the accordion.



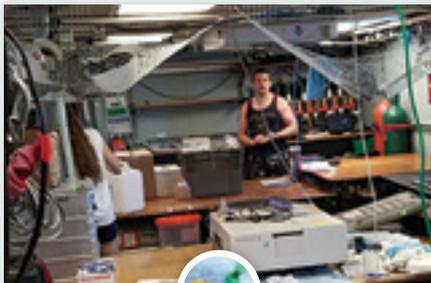
## MAY 29 ...



Our last day of science. We are all trying to get as much data as we can before we begin our transit to San Juan, Puerto Rico. Multiple CTD casts were deployed, along with a ring net to capture zooplankton. Elana and I are running our samples through the RaDeCC and will continue through tomorrow. Tomorrow, packing and cleaning will begin.



## MAY 31 ...

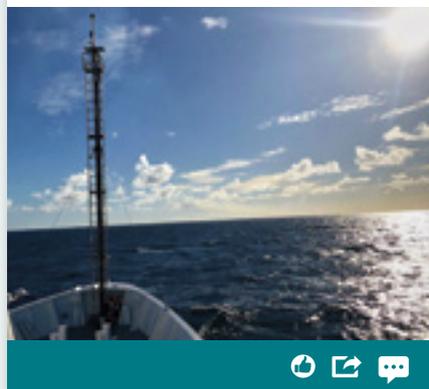


Cleaning and organizing today as we try and complete everything before port. We did not finish packing "everything" until after dinner. At 1900 we had a science meeting, where Joe gave out fun superlatives. By no surprise, my name was Alec "I'm Blogging" Villafana. At around 0030, the RaDeCC finally finished our last samples. We will pack it all up tomorrow morning.



## JUNE 4 ...

I can't believe it is over. My original guess for CTD casts was 40, but it turns out we did 67 casts! Elana and I recorded 240 samples while out here. I have learned so much, and I wouldn't trade this experience for anything. I am excited to get off the ship and go have a day of fun in Puerto Rico, but I will miss everyone on board. For everyone involved in making this happen, I am truly grateful!



## Merry Merry Month of Maymester ...

The Amazon wasn't the only world destination that hosted CCU students and professors for amazing learning experiences this past May. CCU also offers an extensive program of "Maymester" study abroad courses. Maymester is the name for the short term that directly follows the spring semester.

In 2018, students in Maymester courses traveled to Africa, Austria, the Bahamas, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Ecuador, England, Germany, Greece, Ghana, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Scotland, South Africa and Tanzania.

Maymester trips are organized through CCU's Center for Global Engagement. In addition to Maymester courses, study abroad programs are also offered during Wintermester (the period between fall and spring semesters) and Spring Break.



# CCU SOCIAL

PopChantlet

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[SOCIAL MEDIA]

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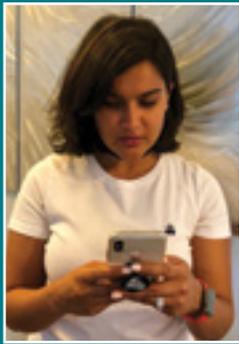
@CCUchanticleers 

## @CCUChanticleers

What does Coastal Carolina University mean to you? This summer, we asked this question to our #CCUSocialMedia audience. Linking into the digital world we live in, we sent CCU PopSockets to members of #TEALnation. Participants applied the accessory to their phones and texted us a 280-character response. Although brief, their replies reveal a lot about Chanticleer pride and affinity.



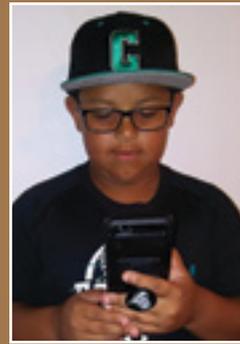
**Radhika Chabba Grubb**  
Alumna (2010)



*"CCU is more than my alma mater. It's the school where my siblings and I started our life in the United States. It's the school where I met my husband, lifelong friends and faculty/staff who are very dear to me. CCU will always be my home."*



**Kamdyn Miller**  
10-year-old Chanticleer fan



*"To me, Coastal means family. I stop by #CCU every time I visit Myrtle Beach. Everyone is so nice and caring; it makes CCU feel like home. I work hard so I can one day wear a teal uniform and earn my degree."*



**Cooper Betsch**  
#FutureChant



*"CCU is home to me. My mommy and daddy both work here, and they decided to start a family! Someday (Aug. 20, 2035 to be exact), I hope to attend my first class at CCU! Oh yeah, I'm already wearing teal on Tuesdays at day care!"*



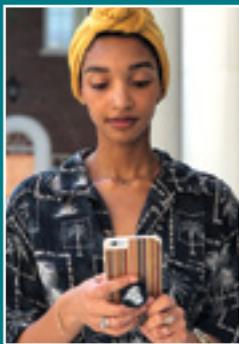
**Abby Barnes**  
Student



*"CCU impacts my past, present and future. It is my second home that provides me with not only an education but friends, family and a lifetime of unforgettable memories. My PopSocket may wear out, but my love for @ccuchanticleers never will!"*



**Nikko Austen Smith**  
Alumna (2018)



*"#CCU became my home for four years. I had my challenges and overcame my struggles that led me to graduate top three in my class, while achieving my dream of booking a major role on one of my favorite TV shows. Coastal makes it possible. Proud!"*



**Harry Titus**  
Staff member and alumnus (2016)



*"CCU is more than what you hear about; it is a true lived experience. The amazing part about the CCU experience is that it does not come with any limitations – all are welcome to experience the true meaning of #TEALnation."*



# COASTAL ATHLETICS RISES IN THE SUN BELT

by Alex Souza

In its second year of membership in the Sun Belt Conference and its first with Chanticleer Football playing a full schedule in the new league, Chanticleer Athletic programs continued their rise with success on the field and in the classroom.

In the fall, cross-country runner Nadeel Wildschutt kicked things off with a dominant season and Sun Belt Championship victory in Boone, N.C. Wildschutt's performance earned a sweep of Sun Belt awards: Runner, Freshman and Newcomer of the Year. He went on to earn All-American honors, the first for a male cross country student-athlete in CCU history.

Men's soccer followed suit with a regular season and tournament championship. The Chants defended home turf with a win over Georgia State to earn their second Sun Belt title in as many years. Head Coach Shaun Docking's team went on to beat Mercer and No. 8 Clemson in the NCAA tournament before falling to eventual national champion Stanford in round 16.

Volleyball closed out the fall on top of the Sun Belt as well. Coastal Volleyball defeated Texas State to win its fourth straight conference championship (two in Sun Belt, two in Big South). The Chants were led yet again by Leah Hardeman, who finished her storied career as the only Division I Volleyball student-athlete to be named Conference Player of the Year for four consecutive years.

● Nadeel Wildschutt

● Malene Kroboll Hansen



Athletic success continued in the spring. The men's golf team returned to its winning ways as first-year head coach Jim Garren led the Chants and walk-on student-athlete Morgan Deneen to championship victories. Women's golf joined the men by sweeping the individual (senior Malene Kroboll Hansen) and team championships.

Baseball rounded out the team success, winning the regular season and conference tournament titles in the Sun Belt. CCU dominated the conference championship in Lafayette, La., winning four straight games. Coastal's success throughout the season earned the team a chance to host a regional in Springs Brooks Stadium.

In the 2017-2018 Learfield Directors' Cup Division I final standings, CCU finished 117 in the nation and top in the Sun Belt. The Learfield Directors' Cup was developed as a joint effort between the National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics (NACDA) and USA Today. Points are awarded based on each institution's finish in NCAA Championships.

After the fall semester, a record 264 Coastal Carolina student-athletes posted at least a 3.0 grade point average

(GPA) for the fall 2017 semester, including a record 129 who earned Dean's List distinction. In addition, 48 Chanticleers had a perfect 4.0 GPA to receive President's List recognition.

In August, the Sun Belt Conference announced its highest grade point averages among its 16 sports for the 2017-2018 academic school year, and CCU was tied for the top school with three sports receiving the highest marks. Men's cross country, men's tennis and women's tennis all topped the league in GPA.

● Morgan Deneen

● Leah Hardeman

● Henrik Mueller

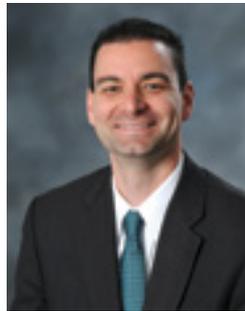




# Class Notes

## Office for Philanthropy welcomes new leaders

**Bryan Steros** has been named interim vice president for philanthropy, overseeing all academic fundraising as well as the Office of Alumni Relations and Women in Philanthropy and Leadership. He is also spearheading I'M IN 2 – The Endowment Campaign for Coastal Carolina University. He joined the philanthropy office seven years ago, and his fundraising background includes working at the Seton Hall Law School, Fordham University, New York Medical College, Ramapo College of New Jersey and the Alzheimer's Drug Discovery Foundation. A native of East Brunswick, N.J., Steros earned a bachelor's degree in marketing from Ramapo College of New Jersey and an MBA from Fordham University with a concentration in management.



*Bryan Steros*

**Diane Fabiano Sanders '05** was named executive director of alumni relations in October 2018. She joined the CCU staff 11 years ago, and has held positions in the Office of Admissions and Merit Awards, Office of Alumni Relations and the Office for Philanthropy. During her tenure in philanthropy, Sanders was in charge of the the faculty and staff giving campaign, which she led to a record high of 74 percent participation. In her most recent role as director for philanthropy, Sanders was charged with fundraising for the Thomas W. and Robin W. Edwards College of Humanities and Fine Arts, retired employees, and campus life and student engagement.



*Diane Fabiano Sanders '05*

### 1978

**Carey Green** is in his 20th year as the head women's basketball coach at Liberty University, which won the 2017-2018 Big South Conference title and advanced to the NCAA Tournament.

Townsend, Tenn. She previously served as assistant principal at Carpenters Elementary School in Maryville, Tenn.

she becomes an alumna," he says. "I am glad she decided to attend CCU."

and works primarily in leadership and technical roles on diverse coastal-sector consulting projects. He earned a doctorate degree in coastal oceanography in 2003 and a master's degree in marine environmental science in 1999, both from Stony Brook University. Batten is an appointed member of the of the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Technical Mapping Advisory Council. He is also leading a comprehensive flood resilience study for the City of Virginia Beach.

### 1983

**Chip Smith** and his business partners have purchased the Brunswick Plantation & Golf Resort in Calabash, N.C.

### 1989

**Cindy Parker** retired after a 29-year career teaching mathematics at Alice Drive Middle School in Sumter, S.C. She is now serving as the executive director for the South Carolina Council of Teachers of Mathematics.

### 1995

**Cedric King** is the manager for community relations at Pinova Inc. in Brunswick, Ga.

### 1996

**Shane Hubbard** is serving a four-year term on the Conway City Council. His wife, **Becky Bradham Hubbard '89, '96**, is chair of the early care and education department at Horry-Georgetown Technical College.

### 1985

**Johnny Gardner** has been elected chair of the Horry County Council. He also serves as the principal attorney of his law group in Conway.

### 1991

**Nancy Opalko** has retired as children's librarian at the Lafayette County and Oxford Public Library in Oxford, Miss. She worked at the library for 25 years.

### 1997

**Jody Jenerette** is the head football coach at West Florence High School. He recently served as head football coach at Aynor High School.

### 1998

**Tom Gwyer**, a 25-year veteran of the Myrtle Beach Fire Department, was named the department's new fire chief in July 2018. He had served as deputy fire chief since April 2016.

### 1986

**Connie Roberts** is the new principal at Townsend Elementary School in

### 1993

**William Royce** reports that his daughter, Devyn Royce, recently completed her freshman year at CCU. "Only three more years until

**Brian Batten** has been promoted to senior associate with Dewberry Inc. He is a senior coastal scientist

**Chadwick Hardee** is president of APDC Cleaning Services in Kissimmee, Fla. Hardee is a former executive for hotel chains Ritz Carlton, Hilton, Waldorf Astoria, Wyndham and Hyatt.

## 1999

**Jordan Roberts Teich** is a civil litigation lawyer who focuses on maritime, environmental and commercial matters. She recently moved from New Orleans, La., back to Charleston, S.C., with her husband, David, and son, Sam.

## 2000

**Amy Hall** is the president of The Barber Shop Marketing & Promotions, a full-service marketing and advertising agency based near Dallas, Texas.

**Tyler McCart** is a regional manager at Haskell, a furniture manufacturing company. His territory includes Alabama, Florida and Georgia. He most recently served as a vertical business development manager at Office Depot.

**Shanda Poston** is the new principal at Scranton Elementary STEAM (Service, Teamwork, Effort, Achievement and Mastery) Academy in Florence County. She previously served as assistant principal at Scranton Elementary.

**Tonya Prentice** was presented the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching from the National Science Foundation at the White House on June 25. This is the nation's highest honor for teachers of science, technology, engineering and mathematics. She is a fifth-grade teacher at Woodstock Elementary School in Bryant Pond, Maine.

**Kelley Weiss** is the new principal at Alpine Crest Elementary School, which is part of Hamilton County Schools in Chattanooga, Tenn. She previously served as the assistant superintendent in Enfield, Maine, as well as a principal and assistant principal for more than seven years.

## 2001

**Matt Daly** has been promoted to director of golf operations at Founders Group International, which owns 22 Grand Strand golf courses. Daly, the 2017 Carolinas PGA Merchandiser of the Year, was promoted in 2017 to regional operations manager for FGI's south end courses. He has been head golf professional at FGI courses TPC Myrtle Beach, the Grande Dunes Resort Course, Myrtlewood Golf Club and Pine Lakes Country Club.

### [ Alumni Profile ]

## Nike Ohonme: The Shoes of Kilimanjaro

This past July, CCU alumna Nike (pronounced “Knee-kay”) Ohonme '17 hiked to the summit of Tanzania's Mt. Kilimanjaro, the largest freestanding mountain in the world. She undertook this challenge as part of a Christian mission trip celebrating the 15th anniversary of Samaritan's Feet, a nonprofit humanitarian aid organization that has provided pairs of shoes to nearly 7 million children in more than 90 nations. The mission of Samaritan's Feet, founded by Nike's parents Manny and Tracie Ohonme, is to inspire hope in children by providing shoes as the foundation to a spiritual and healthy life and the basis of education and economic opportunities.

Nike, a marketing specialist for a health care company in Sioux Falls, S.D., was the only woman on the hiking team. On July 9, the team visited an orphanage where they washed the feet of many children and distributed shoes. On July 15, they reached the summit of the mountain.

“Mt. Kilimanjaro is a beast, one to be respected,” said Nike after the climb. “I wanted to do something big, something that would make me challenge myself to new physical, emotional and spiritual heights. This trip was a way for me to achieve those things all while supporting my parents and their 15 years of global service.”



Nike Ohonme '17





## Class Notes

**Dale Long** was named Conway police chief in April 2018. He has more than 27 years of law enforcement experience and has been with the Conway Police Department since 2010, most recently serving as detective sergeant.

### 2002

**Jabrina Berry** is an assistant property manager with Colliers International's Real Estate Management Services division in Columbia, S.C. She has 11 years of property management experience in South Carolina.

**Paige Bird**, a licensed broker and realtor with RE/MAX Southern Shores in Myrtle Beach, ranks No. 76 nationally on RE/MAX's latest Top 100 list for residential real estate sales during January-April. She has been named South Carolina's No. 1 RE/MAX agent five times.

**Stephen Bismarck** received the University of South Carolina Upstate's Excellence in Teaching and Advising Award for the 2017-2018 academic year. He also was promoted to associate professor with tenure in the School of Education.

**Kristin Kerns** has been named teacher of the year at Cyber Academy of South Carolina, where she teaches fifth-grade English language arts. She is one of eight finalists from across South Carolina for the Charter Institute at Erskine's teacher of the year award.

### 2003

**Tom Griffin** is a special education teacher and acting varsity baseball coach at Conway High School. He also serves as director of the annual Griffstrong Golf Tournament, which raises funds for families affected by cancer.

**Tyler Hasbrouck** is the vice president of e-services at Credit Union 1 in Alaska. He has worked at the credit union for more than 14 years.

**M.J. Huggins III** has served as Carolina Financial Corp's executive vice president since 2010. Prior to joining the company and assisting with the founding of Crescent Bank,

he served as area executive and senior vice president of Carolina First Bank. He attended the Graduate School of Banking at Louisiana State University.

### 2004

**Jake Foutz** is the owner of Fitness Xperts, which was recently voted the No. 1 personal training gym in Orlando, Fla., by the Orlando A-List.

**Debbie Wright Wingfield** was promoted to manager for the Manatee Protection Program and Marine Mammal Stranding Team of Volusia County, Fla.

### 2005

**Michael Hitch** and Meredith Johnson were married in Hartsville on June 16, 2018. He teaches at Belton Middle School in Anderson School District Two.

**Josh Spivey** is the athletic director at Aynor High School. He began teaching at the school in 2006.

### 2006

**Travis Dannelly** is the president and chief operating officer of the United Way of Horry County. He previously worked in the banking industry.

**Ashleigh Branham Dixon** has been promoted to DNA serologist with the Richland County Sheriff's Department in Columbia, S.C.

**Joseph Farry** has been promoted to manager of parcel transportation at DSW Inc. in Columbus, Ohio.

### 2007

**Bryan Bender** is a fourth-generation farmer with Bender Potatoes in Chambersburg, Pa.

**Kotie Kimble** is an assistant men's basketball coach with the Charlotte 49ers.

**Jessica Lowery**, a teaching associate in CCU's public health department, has opened *The Power of Elderberries*. (see Page 35)

### 2008

**Michael Abraham**, PGA head golf professional at Hidden Valley Country Club in Salem, Va., has earned PGA Master Professional status, the highest educational designation that can be obtained by a PGA member. He previously worked in Myrtle Beach as PGA head golf professional at Pine Lakes Country Club and as the assistant PGA professional at the Members Club at Grande Dunes.

**Greg Johnson** is the athletic director at West Florence High School. He previously served as assistant principal at Darlington High School.

**Kelly Jenack Leasure** and **Jack Leasure** celebrated their 10-year wedding anniversary on July 20, 2018. They live in Canandaigua, N.Y., with their three boys: Oscar, Arlo and Beauden.

**Joanna Vrancart** and Sean O'Mara welcomed their first child, Rylee Morgan Vrancart O'Mara, on March 23, 2018.

### 2009

**Zack Byrd** is the new assistant women's golf coach at Colorado

State University in Fort Collins, Colo. Highlights of his professional playing career include reaching the final stage of the PGA Tour Qualifying Tournament and playing in the 2011 U.S. Open.

**Kim Wysong** is a sixth-grade teacher at North Myrtle Beach Middle School. She most recently worked as an instructional technology facilitator in the Durham and Chapel Hill schools in North Carolina.

### 2010

**Caroline Boineau** and James Thomas were married in Brookgreen Gardens on June 2, 2018. She is a realtor with Tradd Residential.

**Tegan Hinaman** served as an athletic trainer at the Shrine Maple Sugar Bowl, an all-star high school football game between New Hampshire and Vermont held Aug. 4, 2018. She is an assistant athletic trainer at Castleton University in Vermont.

**Maranie Rae Staab** recently exhibited her photography at Penn State New Kensington. Her work has been published in *Esquire*, *Huffington Post*, *Mashable* and on CNN.

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[ Alumni Profile ]

## Jessica and Jake Lowery: The power of elderberries

It all started with a Facebook post on Jan. 1, 2018. “I shared a Facebook post of myself making my elderberry syrup along with the list of benefits it offers, including combating the flu,” says Jessica Lowery '07 of Myrtle Beach. “I had such an unexpected response that I began making it in big batches. Within a couple of weeks, we had to get an LLC, a business license and DHEC approval!”

Lowery and her husband, Jake '04, started selling their syrup locally, but after a couple of months realized they needed to do more to meet the demand triggered by the harsh flu season. They took a food safety class through Clemson University and were accepted into the Waccamaw Market Cooperative, which enabled them to sell their syrup at Horry County farmers markets.

Then retailers came calling, and the couple had to move the business into a commercial kitchen in order to keep up, all while maintaining a happy and healthy home life. The Lowerys are parents to three children all under the age of 7.

Jessica '07 and Jake Lowery '04 at CCU's Farmers Market.



Made with organic elderberries, local organic honey, ginger, cloves and cinnamon, the Lowerys' elderberry syrup has many properties with known health benefits, including lots of vitamin C. She recommends taking it for a runny nose, allergy and flu symptoms, sore throat, and for prevention purposes.



It can also be used as a natural fever reducer and has been known to help alleviate chronic inflammation and pain.

Lowery graduated from CCU in 2007 with a degree in health promotion. She earned her master's degree in health education from the University of South Carolina and returned to CCU as a teaching associate.

Jake graduated in 2004 with a degree in finance and works as a financial planner. Or he did, until the Power of Elderberries LLC became so successful that he left his job to work for the new company full time.

“He claims he is just the dishwasher, but if it wasn't for him I wouldn't be here right now,” Jessica says. “He has a dream, and we share that dream.” That dream is to have fewer people in doctors' offices, and that includes Coastal students.

“Because I've been teaching at CCU for 10 years, I know that students are sick all the time,” Jessica says. “They have the flu, and they take all these over-the-counter medicines. At the end of the day, I'd love it if they were able to take something all-natural to find relief without any side effects and be back on their feet and in class within 24 hours. That's what it's all about.”



## [ Alumni Profile ]

### Nikko Austen Smith: Breakout role

Nikko Austen Smith '18 is playing the role of Asha in the dramatic series *Queen Sugar* on the Oprah Winfrey Network. Smith, a native of Houston, landed the part a few months prior to graduating from Coastal's BFA acting program, summa cum laude, in May 2018.

"This was my dream role on my dream show," Smith says. "I had to take it." She appeared in nine episodes of the show's third season, which aired through the summer months. Adapted from a novel by Natalie Baszile, *Queen Sugar* is about the troubled relationship of three Louisiana siblings.

Earning her spot on the show took about two weeks, most of that time spent waiting anxiously for callbacks. First there was the audition notification from Smith's agent, then a self-taped audition sent straight to the casting director. For several days, Smith could do nothing but cross her fingers and wait.

Then came the first call: "I was needed in New Orleans in two days," Smith said. Auditioning for the role in person meant testing her chemistry with the rest of the cast in front of production staff, including the show's director and producer. A day later, she got the role.

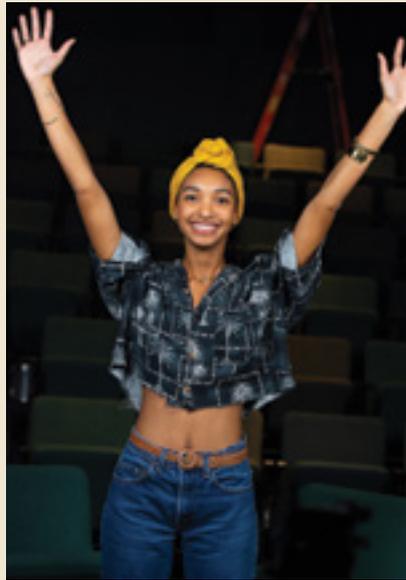
As a theatre student, Smith appeared in the CCU productions of *Big Love*, *Bullets Over Broadway* and *On the Razzle* as well as several independent film productions shot in North Carolina.

Monica Bell, associate professor and chair of the Department of Theatre, said Smith's value as an actor lies not only in her talent, but also in her authenticity.

"Producers are drawn to Nikko's strength, how active she is, how contemporary she is," said Bell. "Nikko is very detailed, very honest. She's willing to be bold. Some actors have the ability to allow a camera into their work. Their energy invites the camera in."

Smith credits Coastal's BFA program with helping her to develop her unique approach. "CCU taught me how to begin mastering my craft and how to be completely unapologetic in everything I do," said Smith.

*Queen Sugar* has been renewed for a fourth season and will return in 2019.



Nikko Austen Smith '18

## 2011

**Roosevelt Board** is the franchise owner of the new Chick-fil-A in the recently renovated food district in Staten Island Mall in New York. He has worked with the company for more than seven years, including serving as general manager of the Chick-fil-A in Murrells Inlet and as the grand opening supervisor for restaurants across the country.

**Paige Cribb** has been elected the first female president of the PGA Carolinas Section. She is the director of student support for CCU's PGA Golf Management program.

**Kristen Lang** recently relocated from Chicago back to her hometown of Baltimore, Md., where she is working for M&T Bank's mid-Atlantic headquarters as a marketing project analyst.

**Zachary Loberger** recently accepted a position as a commercial project manager for Siemens Building Technologies in Atlanta, Ga.

**Aaron Ludgatis** and Kara Buffington were married at Creek Club at l'On in Mount Pleasant, S.C., on April 7, 2018. He is a regional sales manager at Magic Tilt Inc. of Clearwater, Fla. The couple lives in Charleston.

**Michael Midgette**, a PGA-certified teaching and coaching golf professional, recently played in a golf marathon at the Boca Raton (Fla.) Municipal Golf Course from sunrise to sunset to raise money for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

**Derek Murphy** is the director of development and stewardship for the Phi Gamma Delta Educational Foundation in Lexington, Ky. He regularly participates in Out of the Darkness community walks in memory of his friend and CCU alumnus Patrick Ziegler.

**Nina Oates** and her family own The Hideout on 47, a restaurant in Parkersburg, W.Va., that has become a noted venue for nationally known stand-up comics.

## 2012

**Jessica Cinardo** is the executive producer at WMBF News in Myrtle Beach. She began working at the

station as a news content specialist after graduating from CCU.

**Kyle Finneron** is a certified personal trainer and has opened Studio Fitness in Rutland, Vt.

**Sydney Hough** and Aaron Fann were married in Granite Falls, N.C., on July 21, 2018. She is a drama teacher at Rawlinson Road Middle School in Rock Hill, S.C.

**Matthew McCoy** is the founder and artistic director of Bay Area Musicals in San Francisco. He previously served as the casting director and associate artistic director at Berkeley Playhouse, where he still works as a guest director, choreographer and teaching artist.

## 2013

**John Johnson** is the assistant equipment manager for the University of Maryland Baltimore County Retrievers, the first-ever No. 16 seed to defeat a No. 1 seed in NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament history.

## 2014

**Daniel Baker** participated in Miami University's earth expeditions global field course in Belize. He studied coral reefs, manatees, howler monkeys, jaguars and other wildlife while learning the methods communities are using to sustain them in Belize. A graduate student in Miami's global field program, Baker is a zookeeper at Houston Zoo. He lives in Houston, Texas.

**Brantay Cohens** was recently named the teacher of the year at Myrtle Beach's Ocean Bay Middle School, where he teaches eighth-grade mathematics. He also was a top 10 semifinalist for Horry County Schools' teacher of the year.

**Joe and Ashley Baker Griswold '15** celebrated their one-year wedding anniversary on July 15, 2018.

**Alison McQuarrie** has graduated with honors from the Master of Health Administration program at the University of Scranton.

**Alex Ross** plays with the Winnipeg Bombers. He previously played quarterback with the British Columbia Lions.

**Maeve Snyder** is the new coastal training program coordinator at the North Inlet-Winyah Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve in Georgetown, S.C. She recently earned a master's degree in biological sciences from the University of South Carolina.

**Andrew Wyeth** and Allison Guinta were married this past May in Charleston, S.C. They reside in Conway with their twin sons, Easton and William. Andrew works with hybrid production management and sales for Gale Contractor Services.

## 2015

**Felicia Butler** has been named the teacher of the year at Coastal Leadership Academy, where she teaches social studies and math. She is one of eight finalists from across South Carolina for the Charter Institute at Erskine's teacher of the year award.

**Christina Davis** is the new area coordinator with the housing and residence life team at Emory & Henry College in Virginia. She earned a master's degree in student affairs in higher education from Missouri State University.

**Andrew Dorn** competed in the PGA Tour's Memorial Tournament in June 2018, finishing in a tie for 62nd place in a field of 120 players.

**Ruby Durham** is a member of the NBC Charlotte News team. She previously worked in Myrtle Beach at WMBF and WBTW.

**Brittany Hoffnagle** is an environmental scientist and GIS specialist with Woods Hole Group, an international environmental, scientific and engineering consulting organization in Falmouth, Mass. She graduated with a master's degree in coastal marine and wetland studies from CCU.

**Connor Romito** participated in Miami University's earth expeditions global field course in Belize. He studied coral reefs, manatees, howler monkeys, jaguars and other wildlife while learning the methods communities are using to sustain them in Belize. Romito, an associate animal trainer at

Discovery Cove, lives in Orlando, Fla., and is a graduate student in Miami's global field program.

## 2016

**Brandon Albee** has been promoted to second assistant manager at Spyglass Hill Golf Course in Pebble Beach, Calif.

**Kelsey Dominik** was selected in the third round of the inaugural American Softball Association Draft in June 2018.

**Hailey Gilbert** has joined Frampton Construction Co. as an administrative assistant based in its Charleston office.

**Brianna Tramutolo** is an environmental scientist intern at EWMA, an employee-owned environmental consulting and remediation firm in New Jersey.

**Tyler Wyeth** earned a master's degree in international political economy, with a specialization in international development, from the Brussels School of International Studies - University of Kent. His master's thesis was on "The Potential of Renewable Energy for

Southern Mexico in a NAFTA Facilitated ERA." He served as president of the Graduate Student Union during his studies.

## 2017

**Nathaniel Marshall** was named chief personnel officer for Florence School District One.

**Martin Melchor** is the new head men's and women's soccer coach at Jacksonville College in Texas.

**Jeremy Razook** is a digital marketing strategist at Fuel Travel Marketing. He previously served as an intern at Fuel and MyrtleBeach.com.

**Benjamin Rutherford** is an admissions and community outreach coordinator at CCU.

## 2018

**Jake Freedman** is a public relations associate at the Brandon Agency in Myrtle Beach. He previously served as an intern at the agency.

**Nikko Smith** plays Asha on the television series *Queen Sugar*, which airs on the Oprah Winfrey Network (see Page 36).

Coastal Carolina University (CCU) does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, age, genetic information, mental or physical disability, or status as a disabled or Vietnam-era veteran in its admissions policies, programs, activities or employment practices. For more information relating to discrimination, please contact the CCU Title IX Coordinator/EEO Investigator, Coastal Carolina University, Kearns Hall 104B, Conway, SC; Title IX email [titleix@coastal.edu](mailto:titleix@coastal.edu); office phone 843-349-2382; Title IX cell phone 843-333-6229; EEO email [eeo@coastal.edu](mailto:eeo@coastal.edu); or the U.S. Dept. of Education Office for Civil Rights at [www2.ed.gov/ocr](http://www2.ed.gov/ocr).

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## [ Alumni Profile ]

### David Mellis: Economic impact

While growing up in Hertfordshire, England, David Mellis '08 always imagined he would make a name for himself as a professional tennis player. When it came time for him to consider where he would go to college and pursue his tennis career, he looked to the United States and its National Collegiate Athletic Association.

Through his search, Mellis discovered a school in a favorable location with a strong NCAA Division I tennis program—Coastal Carolina University.

“Having played in not-so-good U.K. weather for so many years, the idea of playing tennis in South Carolina weather and by the beach is what led me to Coastal,” Mellis said.

Mellis played the No. 1 to No. 3 singles positions at CCU and thoroughly enjoyed his athletic experience, from having a “great coach” in Chris Powers to forming lifelong friendships with his teammates.

But it was a thought-provoking moment in a freshman economics class that would have the most profound impact on his life. He recalls how economics professor Yoav Wachsman read off six or seven high-profile names from a diverse range of industries and asked the class, “What do all of these people have in common?” The answer: They all have economics degrees.

“I knew I wanted to be in business but wasn’t sure what area,” Mellis said. “Having a degree with a wide range of outcomes had to be a good thing. So that is what led me to pursue a double major in economics and finance.”

With the idea of becoming a tennis star well behind him, Mellis is finding his niche in the financial services sector. Shortly after graduating cum laude from CCU, he began his career with Deutsche Bank in Jacksonville, Fla. Five years



David Mellis '08

later, he moved up to New York City and joined Goldman Sachs as a financial risk business analyst before being promoted to associate lead specialist for short-term interest rates trading.

In 2016, he accepted his current position at Wolfe Research, an up-and-coming equity research firm headquartered near Grand Central Station. As an equity research sales associate, Mellis works with 50 European-based clients to deliver fundamental and quantitative research ideas that have helped to generate approximately \$3 million in revenue this year.

“The business program at Coastal is extremely good,” said Mellis, who became a chartered financial analyst in 2015. “The Wall College prepares students who want to be in the financial services world. There are not many places that can better prepare you for success. I would not have anything close to the career I have today if it weren’t for my four years at Coastal.”



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# GIVING

## CCU launches phase two of I'M IN

*A conversation with President DeCenzo*



*I'M IN 2, the second phase of CCU's major endowment campaign, kicked off on Homecoming Weekend, Nov. 2, with the goal of raising an additional \$20 million by 2023. More than \$22 million was raised in the campaign's first phase, which launched in April 2016 with a target of raising \$20 million by 2020. Highlights of the campaign include securing a 67 percent increase in endowed funds for student scholarships and academic programs, and the number of planned gifts increased by 250 percent. CCU President David A. DeCenzo recently sat for a Q&A with Jerry Rashid of the Office for Philanthropy to discuss the achievements, objectives and benefits of the ongoing I'M IN campaign.*

**Q: The I'M IN campaign focuses solely on increasing CCU's endowment. What are the advantages of having a larger endowment?**

**A:** The biggest advantage of having a larger endowment is that it provides scholarship support for those students who demonstrate financial need. It also provides support for our academic programs, for the faculty and for their research. With rising tuition costs, having a sound endowment that generates additional funding to help support our students' education is absolutely critical.

When you look at peer and aspirant institutions, our endowment, which is now at around \$45 million, should be closer to \$100 million. That was really the impetus of establishing the I'M IN campaign. Ultimately, our goal is to raise about \$75 million, but we are doing it \$20 million at a time. We are on the right trajectory to ultimately reach this goal over the next decade.

**Q: The initial \$20 million goal of the I'M IN campaign was met well ahead of schedule. What contributed most to its success?**

**A:** The success has been multifaceted. The dedication of the Office for Philanthropy staff is very evident. They bought into the I'M IN campaign and have taken a very compelling message into the community. Plus, the timing was right. Our donors are recognizing the success of Coastal Carolina University, recognizing where we are heading and buying into what we are trying to accomplish. Those factors had a tremendous impact on helping us reach our first goal ahead of schedule.

We are very grateful for the leadership of Mark Roach [former vice president for philanthropy and CCU alumnus who retired in July]. He built a very good team. I think it was a personal goal of his to achieve the campaign goal ahead of time. Clearly, it could not have happened without Mark's leadership and everyone who works in philanthropy, from the fundraisers to those who support the fundraisers, such as the research and marketing teams.

**Q: How will CCU use the additional funding created by the larger endowment? What impact will it have on our students and our academic programs?**

**A:** The primary emphasis is to generate additional scholarship funds for our students. As we continue to expand our academic offerings, such as through the new HTC Honors College, we must be in the position to attract top scholastic high school students. In order to achieve this, it is imperative that more monies are available to enable us to compete for these students and provide the kinds of services they expect. In addition to the scholarships, the funding will also support faculty research and programs that will enhance the CCU experience for students.

**Q: How important is it to receive private support from alumni, friends and other constituents?**

**A:** When you look at higher education, not only in South Carolina but across the United States, state-supported funding is declining. The reality is, we cannot expect the state to pump significant money into higher education given the demands of mandatory budget items such as K-12, Medicare and the like. So, it is absolutely critical that our alumni and friends support us any

way they can. Whether you want to call it “pay it forward” or not, the reality is we are a cultural center in this area, and we are a strong economic engine. As this University continues to grow and becomes more successful, so, too, will this area.

As we graduate more students, we’ll have a stronger alumni base. We became an independent institution in 1993, which means our first diplomas that actually have Coastal Carolina University printed on them are only 21 years old. Our alumni are still building their wealth to support their families. The universities that are the most successful are more than 100 years old. They have generations of alumni. We are not there yet because we are a young institution. Over time, we will have more alumni who will be willing and able to give back in a greater proportion. The future is very bright for us.

**Q: What opportunities are there for people to leave a legacy at CCU?**

**A:** We have many ways to support the I’M IN endowment campaign. We offer a variety of naming opportunities on campus, from buildings to academic departments to professorships and so many other areas. Twenty years from now, we’ll be able to look back and realize that the funding initiatives established during the endowment campaign really helped to lay the foundation for the University’s financial strength and stability.

**Q: How does CCU continue its fundraising momentum into I’M IN 2?**

**A:** We must recognize and thank those who participated in the first phase of the campaign and let them know what we have been able to do with their gifts and show the impact they have made. We must show what we are going to be able to accomplish in the future as we continue to raise more funds. This wasn’t a \$20 million campaign; it was phase one of a multi-phased campaign. The I’M IN campaign is an investment not only in this University, but an investment in our future graduates. It enables us to provide opportunities for some who may not otherwise have those opportunities. We must acknowledge the success we have had and build upon that success.

For more information about I’M IN 2 – The Endowment Campaign for Coastal Carolina University, visit [coastal.edu/endowment](http://coastal.edu/endowment) or contact CCU’s Office for Philanthropy at 843.349.5039 or [philanthropy@coastal.edu](mailto:philanthropy@coastal.edu).



I began contributing to Coastal Carolina University roughly 10 years ago. And I am so happy that I did. I am confident that my investment in CCU will benefit the University for generations to come. Please join me in supporting CCU and our deserving students. You will not be disappointed.”

– Kenneth E. Swain  
Namesake, Swain Hall and  
the Swain Scholars program



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[coastal.edu/CCUgive](http://coastal.edu/CCUgive)



## Josh Norman focuses on philanthropy

Former Coastal Carolina University football All-American Josh Norman is devoting a lot of his time and energy to philanthropy these days. At Homecoming 2018, in recognition of largest gift ever given to the University by a former Chanticleer student-athlete, the athletics field house at Brooks Stadium was named the Marrio and Josh Norman Field House, after Josh and his brother Marrio, who also played football for the Chanticleers.

A majority of Norman's gift has been designated for the Brooks Stadium expansion project. It will also provide financial support for walk-on football student-athletes as well as CCU's communication and theatre programs.

This past October, through his Starz 24 Foundation, Norman also announced a \$50,000 gift to Horry County Schools that is helping support recovery efforts related to the Hurricane Florence flood. Last year he was named the NFL Players Association Community MVP for his efforts in providing disaster relief for Puerto Rico following Hurricane Irma and for raising funds for youth programs.

CCU awarded an honorary doctorate of public service to Norman on June 6, 2018. "The board of trustees and I wanted to recognize Josh for everything he's done for the underprivileged, for hurricane victims, for youth," President David A. DeCenzo said. "He's been a wonderful humanitarian, and we felt it was an honor that we could bestow on him just to say thank you for what he is doing for the University, for the community, and for this nation."

Philanthropy was the motivation behind Norman's impressive appearance on TV's *Dancing with the Stars* in April and May 2018. The four-week series featured 10 athletes, and from the moment he hit the dance floor, Norman dazzled the celebrity judges and viewers alike. In week four, only three competitors remained to compete in the finals—Norman, Olympic gold medal figure skater Adam Rippon and two-time Olympic figure skater Tonya Harding. The winner would take home the coveted Mirrorball trophy, but Norman had a higher goal.

"What I hope to get out of *Dancing with the Stars* is to help put my nonprofit organization, Starz24, on the map," he said. Ultimately, Norman finished in second place with Rippon taking home the Mirrorball.

Norman, a native of Greenwood, S.C., played cornerback at CCU from 2008-2011. In 2012, Norman became the third-ever CCU football player to get drafted into the NFL. He is now in his third year as a starting cornerback with the Washington Redskins. Marrio Norman, also from Greenwood, was a defensive back for the Chanticleers in 2004 and from 2006-08.



**Family matters:** Josh and Marrio Norman at CCU for homecoming dedication of the Marrio and Josh Norman Field House.



**Let's dance:** Josh Norman and Sharna Burgess finished in second place on *Dancing with the Stars: Athletes*.

Photo by Kelsey McNeal / Courtesy of American Broadcasting Companies



**Honor bound:** CCU President David A. DeCenzo; HTC officials Von Todd, Mike Hagg, Carlton Lewis, Brent Groome, and Glenda Page; CCU Honors College Dean Sara Hottinger; and Provost Ralph Byington.

## Gift establishes new HTC Honors College and Center for Interdisciplinary Studies

Horry Telephone Cooperative (HTC) Inc. has secured the naming rights to CCU's HTC Honors College and Center for Interdisciplinary Studies, formerly known as University College. Through its agreement with the Coastal Educational Foundation, HTC will receive exclusive naming privileges for 20 years.

The endowed gift will support the HTC Honors College and will fund student research, internships, conference travel, study abroad and other educational expenses.

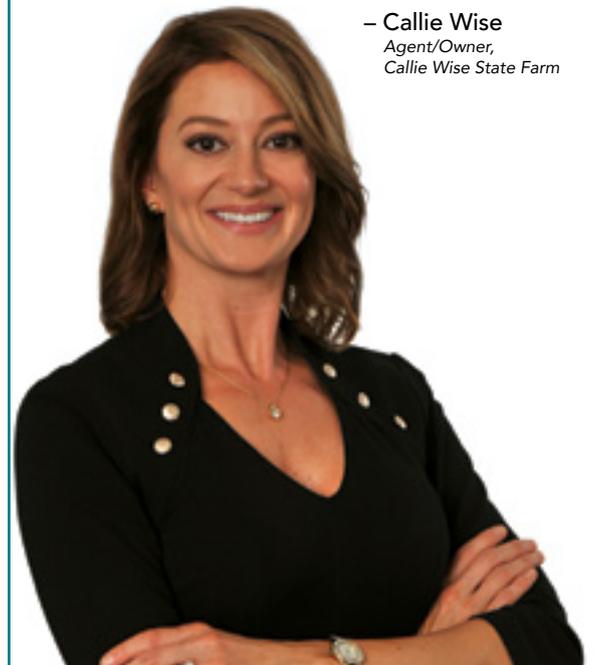
Located in Kearns Hall and scheduled to welcome its inaugural incoming class in Fall 2019, the HTC Honors College and Center for Interdisciplinary Studies will feature many new initiatives and a revised curriculum. In addition, the college will continue to support and advise undeclared first-year students as they select and transition into their major.

According to Sara Hottinger, dean of the HTC Honors College, students within the college will have the opportunity to pursue an in-depth education that requires them to become experts in their academic major while also asking them to think beyond the disciplines as a result of the interdisciplinary requirements of the honors curriculum.



My husband and I are blessed with careers that allow us to give, promote, support and encourage people we interact with daily. State Farm's 'Like a Good Neighbor' is not just a slogan; it is our way of life and a promise to our community. Our goal in giving to CCU is to promote the development of aspiring entrepreneurs who are a part of shaping our future. We live here. We work here. We give here."

– Callie Wise  
Agent/Owner,  
Callie Wise State Farm



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## Meacham establishes political science scholarship



Tim Meacham

Tim Meacham, who serves as University counsel at CCU, has established the Timothy Meacham Endowed Scholarship in Political Science.

To be eligible for the scholarship, students must be entering their sophomore, junior or senior year, have a GPA of at least 3.0, be enrolled in the prelaw or political science program, and submit a personal statement about their goals and aspirations to attend law school. Special consideration will be given to first-generation college students.

"I established this endowed scholarship because I was a first-generation college student who wanted to go to law school but didn't have the resources," said Meacham, a 1979 Coastal graduate. "I recognize the social and financial challenges that are unique to first-generation students who want to attend professional schools. Many of them come from blue-collar working families and need assistance. Also, as the chief legal officer for the institution and an alumnus, I feel it is my duty to give back to a place that has done so much for me. Without CCU, I wouldn't be a lawyer."

As an undergraduate, Meacham served as president of the Student Government Association and was the editor of the student newspaper, *The Chanticleer*. He also was elected to Coastal's chapter of Omicron Delta Kappa honor society and received the outstanding student award in CCU's Department of Politics. Meacham was the first CCU graduate to attend law school. He is a 1982 graduate of the University of South Carolina School of Law.

## Holliday family establishes endowed fund in sustainability at CCU

The family of Joseph W. and Frances F. Holliday of Galivants Ferry, S.C., has made a generous financial contribution to the College of Science at Coastal Carolina University. In recognition of the establishment of the Department of Marine Science Endowed Program Fund in Sustainability, the dean's suite in the Science II building will be named the Joseph William and Frances Fields Holliday Dean's Suite in memory of the parents of William and Judson Holliday and Betty Holliday McLeod.



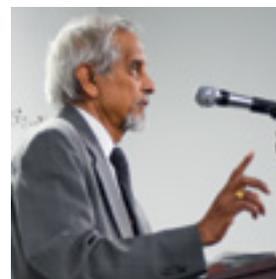
Family values: Joseph W. Holliday III, Betty Holliday McLeod, J. William F. Holliday, CCU President David DeCenzo, and Cheryl and Judson J. Holliday.

The newly established endowed fund will support research by marine science students working on sustainability issues related to oceans. Preference will be given to projects by students who are formally enrolled in the sustainability certification program.

"My mother was very keen on education with a strong interest in the sciences," William Holliday said. "Through this gift, I hope students get a strong educational foundation on which to build. Learning the sciences makes you develop an awe of life. And awe is the beginning of wisdom."

The late Joseph W. Holliday was an original founder and devoted supporter of CCU.

## Dr. Subhash Saxena Math Suite established



Subhash C. Saxena

In recognition of a recent gift to the College of Science from Subhash C. Saxena, a retired CCU faculty member, the mathematics faculty office suite and teaching space on the second floor of the newly renovated R. Cathcart Smith Science Center has been named the Dr. Subhash Saxena Math Suite.

The new endowed fund will support faculty members and undergraduate students who conduct mathematics research.

Saxena, distinguished professor emeritus, left his native India in late 1959 after earning a bachelor's, master's and Ph.D., all in mathematics, from the University of Delhi. He began teaching at Coastal in 1973 and was a mainstay of the Department of Mathematics and Statistics for nearly 30 years before retiring in 2000. The annual Dr. Subhash C. Saxena Math Contest, named in his honor, draws students to campus from throughout South Carolina to compete for awards, prizes and scholarships.

In 1985, Saxena earned the University's Distinguished Teaching Award and was then named Outstanding Teacher within the University of South Carolina system. He served as mathematics department chair from 1987 to 1993. He is also credited with establishing a Pi Mu Epsilon national mathematics honor society chapter on campus.

# I'M IN 2

## THE COASTAL CAROLINA UNIVERSITY ENDOWMENT CAMPAIGN



### Campaign goal:

Increase CCU's endowment by an additional \$20 million by 2023

### What it means:

Approximately \$800,000 in additional funding for student scholarships and academic excellence



Thanks to the support of many of you, Coastal Carolina University has experienced extraordinary progress. The determination of the people here is unmatched by any that Terri and I have ever encountered. Now is the time for transformational philanthropy to shape the University's future. With your financial support during this campaign, imagine how many more students will discover their passions and follow their dreams. Together, we will help extend CCU's impact well beyond Horry County, beyond our state borders, and beyond even the expectations of our founding fathers who, 64 years ago, made higher education a priority and this University a reality. I'm in. Are you?"

— David A. DeCenzo, Ph.D.  
President, Coastal Carolina University

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TOP TIER

# CHANT 1 CLEER



## > LESSONS LEARNED

Family values continue to guide Grand Strand businessman  
*David Sage '85*

by Jerry Rashid

David Sage '85 used to watch his father sit at a card table and pay the family's bills in their home in Richmond, Va. He could tell from the expression on his dad's face that money was tight. But Donald and Mary Etta Sage made sure David and his two sisters always had enough food on the table and received presents at Christmastime and on their birthdays.

Each July, the Sages would pack up the family car and head to Cherry Grove Beach on the Grand Strand for a week of fun and relaxation. They'd rent an old beach house that lacked air conditioning, but it didn't matter because most of their vacation was spent playing on the beach and in the ocean. The annual trips included eating out one night in nearby Calabash, N.C., and enjoying a tasty treat at the Original Painter's Homemade

Ice Cream in North Myrtle Beach.

"I would look forward to that week at the beach the whole year," Sage said. "I'd always ask if we could spend two weeks next year, and my dad would say maybe, but we never did."

Sage's dream of spending more time at the beach would come to fruition just a few years later. His dad, an avid beachgoer, taught him how to sail when he was 14. One day at the beach, Sage caught a ride on a catamaran and was hooked for life.

At age 21, he moved to Myrtle Beach, bought a Hobie Cat and opened Ocean Watersports. Located just off 3rd Avenue South, the business, which now offers activities such as parasailing, jet skiing and banana boat rides, celebrated its 38th anniversary this past summer.



**Family business:** (left to right) Delanie Sage '15, '17, Marla Sage, David Sage and Wyatt Sage

Once the young business owner settled in at the beach, he turned his attention to continuing his college education. He had previously attended the University of Virginia. After meeting with Darcy Carr, then dean of the business school and an economics professor, Sage enrolled at Coastal Carolina.

“My very first accounting class with Dr. [Lou] Gilles is what inspired me to pursue accounting,” said Sage, who double-majored in accounting and finance. “I had an aptitude for it, and he really encouraged me. And he recommended me for a scholarship, which really helped financially.

“I only had Dr. Gilles for that first accounting class, but it really gave me that spark. Then professor [James] Eason ignited that spark. He was a great, great teacher and mentor. Really explained everything so well. You understood what he was teaching as soon as he said it. Professor [Mike] Munden was also a great teacher and mentor who helped me a lot. And I liked Dr. [Gerald] Boyles’ teaching style so much that I took every finance course that he taught. Those professors have really had the biggest influence on me and my career.”

The CCU-Sage connection runs long and deep. His wife, Marla, is the longtime coach of the Coastal Carolina Dance Team, which regularly performs at Chanticleer athletic events. Their daughter, Delanie '15, '17, earned both a bachelor's degree in marine science and a master's degree in education at CCU; and their son, Wyatt, also attended the University. In addition to operating Ocean Watersports with his family, Sage and his business partner Randy Bell '85 are the co-owners of Sage & Bell PA, CPA, a professional tax and accounting firm in Surfside Beach.

“It's great to have a family business, where we can work together and see each other every day,” Sage said. “It's really a

blessing for our family to have done this for so long together. Wyatt and Delanie grew up in the business. It's a great way to be with our kids all the time.”

For Sage, family is paramount. That's why the recent passing of his dad really moved him. While combing through his dad's paperwork, he discovered the family's budgets dating back to 1956—the year his parents were married. The ledgers revealed that his parents gave monthly to their church, and that his dad, who earned an industrial engineering degree from Virginia Tech, contributed to the Hokie Club for 52 consecutive years. Sage said, “I was amazed at how we did so much with so little.”

Following in his dad's footsteps, Sage generously gives back to his own alma mater. A Chanticleer Athletic Foundation board member, he supports initiatives such as the Brooks Stadium expansion project and the Chanticleer Gala. He also is contributing to the newly created James F. Eason Endowed Professorship in Accounting and the TEAL 1000 student scholarship fund.

“I had many great professors who helped me to have a successful career in accounting and watersports,” Sage said. “I often think about the lessons and inspiration from them. So, whenever I am asked to support Coastal, I say yes without hesitation.

“When I look in the mirror, I see my dad looking back at me. I look just like he did when he was my age. I never miss a day of work, just like he never did. He taught me to sail and shared his love of the beach and the ocean with me. That is what brought me to Coastal and a career at the beach. He taught me the value of a dollar, and I have been a saver since I started working. He taught me to give back, and I have always done that. He taught me about God and faith. For many years I thought I was doing what I do from my own initiative. I now realize I learned it all from my parents.”

# 2018 CHANTICLEER

## B A S K E T B

### Scoring High

During the 2017-18 season, Coastal Carolina women's basketball scored a season-high 97 points against Troy.



### Double Down

The Chanticleer men's and women's basketball teams both defeated UTA at the HTC Center during the 2017-18 season.



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A L L



### Quintuple Double

Coastal Carolina men's basketball saw all five starters score double digits against Louisiana-Monroe during the 2017-18 season.



### Quarterfinals

Coastal Carolina women's basketball defeated Georgia State to advance to the 2017-18 Sun Belt Conference quarterfinals.



## WOMEN'S SCHEDULE

NOV. 6  
vs. WESTERN CAROLINA

NOV. 13  
vs. SOUTH CAROLINA STATE

NOV. 18  
AT UC RIVERSIDE

NOV. 23  
vs. BOWLING GREEN

NOV. 25  
vs. MEMPHIS

DEC. 1  
AT NORTH CAROLINA CENTRAL

DEC. 5  
vs. MEREDITH COLLEGE

DEC. 8  
vs. NORTH CAROLINA WESLEYAN

DEC. 18  
vs. AUBURN  
Myrtle Beach Convention Center, Myrtle Beach, S.C.

DEC. 20  
vs. RICE  
Myrtle Beach Convention Center, Myrtle Beach, S.C.

DEC. 29  
AT UNC GREENSBORO

JAN. 3  
vs. TROY\*

JAN. 5  
vs. SOUTH ALABAMA\*

JAN. 10  
AT TEXAS STATE\*

JAN. 12  
AT UTA\*

JAN. 19  
AT APPALACHIAN STATE\*

JAN. 24  
vs. LITTLE ROCK\*

JAN. 26  
vs. ARKANSAS STATE\*

JAN. 31  
AT ULM\*

FEB. 2  
AT LOUISIANA\*

FEB. 7  
vs. UTA\*

FEB. 9  
vs. TEXAS STATE\*

FEB. 16  
vs. APPALACHIAN STATE\*

FEB. 21  
AT GEORGIA SOUTHERN\*

FEB. 23  
AT GEORGIA STATE\*

FEB. 28  
vs. LOUISIANA\*

MARCH 2  
vs. ULM\*

MARCH 7  
AT SOUTH ALABAMA\*

MARCH 9  
AT TROY\*

## MEN'S SCHEDULE

NOV. 6  
vs. FERRUM

NOV. 9  
AT CAMPBELL

NOV. 13  
AT TULANE

NOV. 16  
vs. MANHATTAN

NOV. 17  
vs. UNC ASHEVILLE

NOV. 18  
AT NORTHERN KENTUCKY

NOV. 20  
vs. METHODIST

NOV. 30  
AT SOUTH CAROLINA

DEC. 5  
vs. HAMPTON

DEC. 9  
AT WAFFORD

DEC. 16  
vs. NORTH CAROLINA CENTRAL

DEC. 21  
AT COLLEGE OF CHARLESTON

JAN. 3  
AT TROY\*

JAN. 5  
AT SOUTH ALABAMA\*

JAN. 10  
vs. TEXAS STATE\*

JAN. 12  
vs. UTA\*

JAN. 19  
vs. APPALACHIAN STATE\*

JAN. 24  
AT LITTLE ROCK\*

JAN. 26  
AT ARKANSAS STATE\*

JAN. 31  
vs. ULM\*

FEB. 2  
vs. LOUISIANA\*

FEB. 7  
AT UTA\*

FEB. 9  
AT TEXAS STATE\*

FEB. 16  
AT APPALACHIAN STATE\*

FEB. 21  
vs. GEORGIA SOUTHERN\*

FEB. 23  
vs. GEORGIA STATE\*

FEB. 28  
AT LOUISIANA\*

MARCH 2  
AT ULM\*

MARCH 7  
vs. SOUTH ALABAMA\*

MARCH 9  
vs. TROY\*





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