**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO CONGRATULATE THE COLLEGE OF CHARLESTON UPON THE SESTERCENTENNIAL CELEBRATION OF THE SCHOOL’S FOUNDING AND TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR THE ADMINISTRATION, FACULTY, STUDENTS, AND ALUMNI FOR CONTINUING THE ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE WHICH THE FOUNDERS ESTABLISHED.

Whereas, founded in 1770 during the intellectually robust period of the Enlightenment and on the cusp of the American Revolution, the College of Charleston, “the College,” has grown into one of the most respected institutions of higher education in the nation. Above Charleston’s brick walkways accented by wrought iron marvels, Spanish moss draping from ancient live oaks whispers the wonders of nature which two and a half centuries of students at the College have sought to explore; and

Whereas, in 1770, Lieutenant Governor Bull urged the colony’s general assembly to establish a provincial college so that young men in the area would not need to travel abroad for higher education; and

Whereas, after the American Revolution South Carolinians focused on establishing a college, and in 1785, the College of Charleston was chartered to “encourage and institute youth in the several branches of liberal education.” Numerous College founders had major roles in securing the nation’s independence and in creating the new republic. Edward Rutledge, Arthur Middleton, and Thomas Heyward signed the Declaration of Independence, and John Rutledge, Charles Pinckney, and Charles Cotesworth Pinckney were framers of the United States Constitution; and

Whereas, Robert Smith, rector of St. Philip’s Church, served as the first president, and the College conducted its first classes in January 1790 on the ground floor of Reverend Smith’s home on Glebe Street, now the residence for College of Charleston presidents. The College graduated its first class of six students in 1794; and

Whereas, after President Smith left the post in 1797, operations of the College were sporadic and completely halted in 1811 but revived in 1824 when Reverend Jasper Adams took the helm and established a broad curriculum and began construction of Randolph Hall. When plans for the College’s expansion met with competition from plans for South Carolina College, now the University of South Carolina, the City of Charleston established the College as a municipal college, the first municipal college in the nation; and

Whereas, by 1850, Randolph Hall was expanded, and Porters Lodge and a fence around the Cistern Yard were constructed, and although many students and faculty left to serve the Confederacy during the Civil War, classes were not suspended until late in 1864, after bombardment of the city by Federal troops left Charleston in ruins. Ephraim M. Baynard of Edisto Island gave 161,200 dollars to save the College, and classes resumed a year later; and

Whereas, before Harrison Randolph became the College president in 1897, the College endured financial crises, hurricanes, and the 1886 earthquake. He revised the curriculum, built residence halls, and created scholarships to draw students from around the State. The College introduced athletics, including basketball, tennis, golf, fencing, and swimming. The College admitted its first ten women in the fall of 1917 to bolster enrollment during World War I; and

Whereas, the Night School of Commerce and Administration was introduced in 1921, and The Great Depression actually boosted enrollment. In 1931, commencements began to be held on the Cistern with women in white dresses, each carrying a carnation, later a rose, and men attired in suits, later white dinner jackets; and

Whereas, by 1939, the number of female students exceeded that of males. During World War II, degree requirements were shortened to three years, and facilities were used by military personnel; and

Whereas, the level of academic excellence at the College soared in the 1950s, and numbers of graduates received post‑graduate‑study fellowships. The College opened the Marine Biological Laboratory, but the school, operating at a deficit and using endowments to offset overages, had depleted endowment funds by 1967; and

Whereas, on its two hundredth anniversary in 1970, the College of Charleston became a state institution, marking the beginning of growth with the development of leading programs in academic areas that capitalize on unique natural and cultural strengths of Charleston and the Lowcountry, especially marine biology and fine arts; and

Whereas, within two years enrollment had tripled, and by 2001, the student body numbered more than ten thousand. The physical facilities expanded from fewer than ten buildings to more than one hundred, and the full‑time faculty increased almost eightfold; and

Whereas, the University of Charleston, referred to as the Graduate School and founded in 1992 for graduate programs for the College, now offers twenty‑two degree and ten certificate programs and coordinates support for the College’s many nationally recognized faculty research programs. That same year Robert Dukes of the physics department and his student Gabriel Drake discovered an eclipsing binary, a double star; and

Whereas, by 1994, students represented forty states from across the nation and sixty‑six international countries. Two years later the College opened its first international campus in Trujillo, Spain, and a year later a campus in Annot, France, and a program in Cuba. A program originally developed to assist young men of the Lowcountry has grown to nourish the minds of people around the world of all ethnicities, genders, races, and nations. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, congratulate the College of Charleston upon the sestercentennial celebration of the school’s founding and recognize and honor the administration, faculty, students, and alumni for continuing the academic excellence which the founders established.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Dr. Andrew T. Hsu, President of the College of Charleston.

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