March 24, 2016

Dear Alumni and Friends,

I’m pleased to share some very exciting news with you regarding a new partnership between USC Aiken and the Aiken Advanced Manufacturing Partnership, LLC and the Savannah River National Laboratory (SRNL). Following a highly competitive RFP process, USC Aiken has been selected as the proposed site for the new SRNL Advanced Manufacturing Center (AMC). Savannah River Nuclear Solutions (SRNS), as operator of the SRNL, has selected the Aiken Advanced Manufacturing Partnership, LLC, an affiliate of the Economic Development Partnership, to develop a proposal for a 70,000 square foot space to house the AMC.

The Aiken Advanced Manufacturing Partnership, LLC is a collaboration made up of twelve different partner groups, including USC Aiken, which will be integral to various aspects of the ultimate design, finance, construction, and operation of the facility. The proposed SRNL Advanced Manufacturing Center will include chemistry, engineering, and fabrication labs, work and office spaces, and public spaces dedicated to promote partnerships among industry, academia, and government in the creation and implementation of new technology.

USC Aiken will be working closely with the SRNL to discuss ways we can involve faculty and students in the work and research conducted at the AMC. No high-risk material research will be located at the AMC. That part of the SRNL mission will remain at the Savannah River Site. Rather, the AMC will focus on enhancing current and developing new technologies associated with cyber security, virtual simulation, advanced robotics, and smart manufacturing. According to Savannah River Site Manager Jack Craig, “The Department of Energy is pleased with this new opportunity in Advanced Manufacturing. It is our duty to find smarter and safer ways to address the Environmental Management, National Security, and Clean Energy needs of our nation.” The AMC will continue the fundamental work of the DOE National Labs by creating and applying new ideas and new technologies to the benefit of the private sector, which will in turn, create more competitive industries, for a more economically vibrant and secure region and nation.

Locating the AMC at USC Aiken will allow us to take advantage of the “power of proximity” and provide students and faculty opportunities to contribute intellectual capital in new ways to assist SRNL in “putting science to work.” It is easy to imagine possible collaborations among the scientists at the AMC and USC Aiken students and faculty in disciplines such as technical writing, engineering, industrial math, computer science, graphic design, the laboratory sciences, and the business disciplines (just to name a few).

As this proposed project moves toward realization, we will learn more details which I will share more details with you. For now, I hope you will join me in celebrating the exciting possibilities generated by this new collaboration.

Thank you.

Sandra J. Jordan
Chancellor, USC Aiken