



The Office of the Chancellor  
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA AIKEN

*December 7, 2016*

Dear University Community,

As 2016 draws to a close, I am writing to wish you and your loved ones a peaceful and happy new year.

This has been an extraordinary year at USC Aiken. Through our collective effort, I have no doubt that we've made a positive difference in students' lives, breakthroughs in research and scholarship, and deeper connections in our communities. We welcomed newcomers and said good-bye to dear friends. We welcomed our largest and one of the most diverse student classes in the history of our university, broke ground on a pedestrian bridge, completed a greenhouse, upgraded technology to advance teaching and learning, and launched several new student-life and academic programs, which will provide greater opportunities and support for students. We've witnessed athletic wins and continued to outperform others in the influential rankings. We increased our sustainability, strengthened our financial situation, and reinforced our connections abroad.

It was also a challenging year with new accountability measures and federal laws to assimilate into our routine; a divisive national election; and heightened ideological, racial, and social tensions surfacing across the United States. This backdrop serves to amplify the essential work that we do to prepare our students for a future that includes critical thinking, responsibility, service, and respect for self and others.

It is a privilege to be at this remarkable institution and a great pleasure to work with all of you. I want to thank our faculty and staff for their devotion to students and tireless effort. I also want to recognize our students for their curiosity and drive, their open minds and commitment to learning. All of this is what makes this a special, vibrant place to work and to learn.

I look forward to seeing you at our Convocation Ceremony on December 8<sup>th</sup> as we celebrate our students and their achievements. It will be a special day for them, their families, and all of us in the Pacer family.

I hope you enjoy the upcoming holiday season. May you revel in the camaraderie of friends and colleagues, and feel the joy, happiness and love of family as you celebrate with those most dear to you. While we have so much to be proud of at our University, I look forward to working with you to make 2017 our best year yet.

Warmest Wishes and Happy Holidays,

**Sandra Jordan**, Chancellor