Dear USC Aiken Colleagues,

On Wednesday, May 9th, USC Aiken’s alumni ranks will swell by 412 individuals as we graduate the Class of 2018. For many of us, our commencements are the most exciting day of the year – when hard work culminates in celebration with a mixture of glee, excitement, apprehension, and gratitude by the graduates, their families, and friends. During our commencement celebration, Vice Admiral Chuck Munns, a long-time friend of USC Aiken, member of the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education, former CEO of the Savannah River Site, and distinguished leader, will challenge our graduates to use their education to make a positive impact on the world.

Commencement gives the seniors a moment to pause and reflect upon all they learned during their time at USC Aiken, but it also provides time for all of us to reflect on the past year and begin to think about the upcoming academic year.

The 2017-2018 academic year has been an exciting and eventful year for us. Among the many noteworthy activities and achievements, the university accomplished the following: welcomed 44 new faculty and staff to USC Aiken; launched Leading Forward-- our Strategic Planning Process; hosted the COPLAC undergraduate research conference; held nine orientation sessions for new students; won recognition as a College of Distinction; launched a taskforce on Diversity; Inclusion, and Belonging; implemented a student leadership exchange with our partners in India; began a new “Day of Giving” campaign; hosted 164 athletic competitions at our Pacer facilities; renovated numerous spaces on campus; launched the online MBA and RN to BSN programs; published the 50th volume of Broken Ink; raised money to purchase a new Steinway concert grand piano and made progress on becoming an all Steinway university; moved forward with three new program proposals; held the largest Scholars Showcase in our history; hosted the S.C. Humanities Festival; implemented a lecture capture and closed captioning system; increased alumni participation in contributing to scholarship funds; sponsored Pacers and Polo for the fifteenth year; and opened an office/collaboration space on the alley in downtown Aiken.
After commencement, we will host our annual Faculty/Staff Appreciation Day at noon in the SAC Gym. I hope you will be able to attend. It will be an opportunity to celebrate faculty and staff anniversaries and honor our faculty and staff award recipients. It will also provide another opportunity to tell our retiring colleagues good bye as they move on to new adventures.

As I complete my sixth year as chancellor of USC Aiken, I am more impressed by the achievements and commitment of our campus community than ever. I feel incredibly privileged to work with you and for you as a member of the Pacer family. I invite you to join me in keeping the positive momentum of our beloved university moving forward. I wish you all the best as we bring another academic year to a close. Thank you for your dedication and commitment to USC Aiken and to our students. I hope you have a wonderful summer, get a little R&R…and Go Pacers!

With warm regards,

Sandra J. Jordan
Chancellor