



CAROLINA
UNIVERSITY

We Are Moving!



Dear Friends of Carolina University,

The last few months have been exciting to say the least as several significant events happened over the course of only a few hours that totally changed the trajectory of Carolina University. Previously, we had been dealing with several challenging situations.

First, our enrollment had grown significantly to the point of not having room for all residential students who want to live in campus housing. In 2023, we faced another significant surge in undergraduate main campus enrollment, prompting the university to request all graduate students living in multiple floors of residence halls to seek off-campus housing to make way for the increasing numbers of undergrads.

By the spring semester of 2024, the situation intensified, leading CU to convert office spaces into housing to accommodate the growing residential student population. The substantial increase in applications for fall 2024 semester highlighted the urgent need for a more expansive campus. While running out of space is a positive sign of growth, it poses significant challenges. With limited room to build or expand parking areas due to being landlocked on the current campus, CU concluded that relocation was the only viable solution, but that would require some financial relief, a great place to move, and a buyer for the current campus.

Second, Carolina University had been grappling with serious financial challenges for several years due to delays in selling the Southeastern Bible College (SEBC) campus in Birmingham, Alabama, following the 2017 merger. For seven years, CU carried the heavy burden of debt service and maintenance expenses for two substantial campuses, at times threatening our very existence. I personally prayed for years for the SEBC campus to sell quickly at a good price, only to be repeatedly disappointed as several deals fell through at the last minute, often after navigating the zoning process and coming within days of closing. It was incredibly frustrating.

Third, we had been eagerly anticipating a game-changing pledged gift from the estate of George Rawlings. However, just a few months ago, we learned that we might have to wait a couple more years for its fulfillment, which was only added to the frustration.

On March 4, 2024, I asked trustees, faculty, and staff to join me for seven weeks of daily prayer and to specifically pray that we would be able to close on the SEBC property and receive the pledged Rawlings estate gift sooner rather than later. But according to Ephesians 3:20, God is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us. Consider all the things that happened within a few hours.

On April 9, we received the gift from the estate of George Rawlings, and to our astonishment, it was millions of dollars more than anticipated! Shortly after this, we received confirmation that financing was secured for a church to finalize the purchase of the SEBC campus. We successfully closed the sale a few weeks later. With the combined funds from the gift and the sale, CU was able to pay off numerous obligations and loans in both Alabama and North Carolina, significantly improving our financial situation. This newfound stability has allowed us to begin exploring options for relocating to a larger campus.

We didn't have long to wait. Within hours of receiving the generous Rawling gift, I received two other pieces of news that reminded me that God's timing is perfect and made me thankful that the Rawlings gift and SEBC sale had not happened earlier.

First, Tony Alford, a former CU Board member and longtime friend of Carolina University, informed me that the stunning HanesBrands (Hanes) world headquarters, just a fifteen-minute drive from our current campus, might be available and would be an excellent new campus option for CU to expand. The property boasts two beautiful multistory buildings totaling nearly 500,000 square feet and sits on approximately 117 acres, featuring lakes, waterfalls, and numerous potential building sites for residence halls, athletic facilities, and more.

Second, within hours of learning about the Hanes opportunity, Pastor Tommy Lockwood of Salem Baptist Church, located across the street from our current campus, informed me that Salem Baptist Christian School (SBCS) had reached maximum capacity and was considering constructing a new building to accommodate their anticipated growth. I asked him if they would be interested in purchasing the Carolina University campus instead, and the answer was a resounding yes.

Over the last few weeks, all the pieces started coming together. Carolina University now plans to operate on our current campus during fall 2024 while retrofitting one of the Hanes buildings for classes, library, etc. to begin operations there in January 2025. Hanes will leaseback the other building through the rest of 2024 and then move to a new location in January 2025. CU will leaseback dorms and the gymnasium building from SBCS over the next couple of years while residence halls and athletic facilities are built on the new campus. SBCS intends to finalize the CU campus purchase by the end of 2024 and retrofit portions of the campus for school use there by fall 2025.

We couldn't be happier with this arrangement. Salem Baptist Church is like a father to Carolina University. It was Salem's Pastor Dr. Charles Stevens who founded Piedmont Bible College (now CU) in 1945, and we are thrilled that Salem Baptist Christian School will be purchasing and using the campus going forward. The timing of all these things feels like the good hand of God.

I saw something on my first tour of the Hanes buildings that reminded me of this. Their lovely café (that will become our CU cafeteria) is very appropriately named Threads Café and features multiple, stunning, floor-to-ceiling chandeliers that look like they are made of threads. I knew from the moment I saw them that we would never change that name, and our theme for the 2024-2025 academic year and beyond would be "Threads and Tapestry."



My mind quickly went to a passage of scripture and a familiar poem. Ephesians 2:10 says that “We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” God is the weaver, and we are the tapestry, as also described in *The Weaver* by Grant Colfax Tullar.

My life is but a weaving
Between my God and me.
I cannot choose the colors
He weaveth steadily.

Oft’ times He weaveth sorrow;
And I in foolish pride
Forget He sees the upper
And I the underside.

Not ’til the loom is silent
And the shuttles cease to fly
Will God unroll the canvas
And reveal the reason why.



The dark, ugly threads that come our way in life don’t seem to be helpful or make any sense. When the promised gift didn’t arrive quickly and the SEBC property didn’t sell for years, I couldn’t see the purpose. When our current campus filled past capacity with no funds to build or move, the underside of the tapestry wasn’t very pretty. But over a few hours in April, it seemed that God allowed me to glimpse the tapestry from His side. And when I saw Threads Café, I knew how I would tell this story and glorify Him throughout the rest of my life. I even intend to have someone weave a beautiful tapestry to hang in my office that might look something like this.



There are many other threads coming together in this beautiful tapestry.

Launching Pad

I have prayed for many years that God would use Carolina University and our ever-growing network as a giant launching pad for laborers into His harvest fields, and that we would inspire thousands to carry the gospel of Jesus Christ to all nations. Now the prayer includes the request that this new campus will be the Kennedy Space Center for world evangelism to continue the momentum of recent years. Carolina University has trained more pastors over the last few years than at any previous period in our history. This includes over a hundred leaders who are currently enrolled in our Master of Arts in Ministry delivered in Portuguese and scores more who earned degrees in Biblical Studies and Ministry degrees that we translated into Spanish, not to mention all our vibrant Divinity School programs delivered in English.

Our goal and prayer are that God will use Carolina University to literally fulfill the Great Commission by graduating key, gospel-multiplying, self-reproducing Christian leaders from every nation on earth. We are halfway there by graduating leaders from almost a hundred countries, and we are working hard on the other half!

Student Employment and Career Development

Over the last several years, Carolina University developed a very robust student employment program to make college more affordable and help students prepare to be responsible, hardworking leaders in their future careers. Student employees will provide janitorial, security, groundskeeping and many other jobs on the new campus.

Central America Irony

Carolina University is poised to become the first private university in North Carolina to achieve Hispanic Serving Institution status. This is an official designation from the US Department of Education when undergraduate, on-campus enrollment reaches 25% Hispanic. We would already be there if we were allowed to count international students, because we have recently seen a strong surge in international Latino enrollment. I have personally taken eight trips to Mexico, Central America, and South America in the last three years with more trips planned to three additional countries this fall. My first trip was to Honduras where we built strong relationships with leaders of several private, bilingual schools. By this fall, around 5% of all Honduran college students in the entire USA will be enrolled at Carolina University!

On that first trip to Honduras, I saw the large Hanes clothing factory (called a maquila locally). Many of the children, relatives, and friends of those Hanes factory workers in Honduras are enrolled at CU and will soon be sitting in classrooms at the former Hanes world headquarters preparing for well-paying careers in high-demand fields that should help lift them and their families. The tapestry is beautiful.



Volunteers and Donors

God is at work at Carolina University, and we are hoping that many of our friends and alumni will join in during this crucial moment to help us with this game-changing transition. We need volunteers to help with numerous projects, and we need generous donors to give money, furnishings, furniture, and equipment to help us ensure that everything is done with the highest levels of quality and excellence. God's work deserves our very best.

Volunteers: Please consider volunteering yourself or bring a group to help take care of one or more of the following projects. There will be many other areas that will need volunteer help as we go forward.

- Re-shingle the picnic shelter
- Build more picnic tables
- Bushhog all the areas that need it
- Pressure wash the outside of both buildings (a total of 11 floors)
- Clean all windows (inside and out)
- Pave or reseal all parking lots and restripe
- Clean up lakes
- Repair pump and fountain on lake
- Reinstall stacked stone facade on both waterfalls
- Build kayak shack and pier
- Clean, paint and organize maintenance utility shed
- Build seven prayer stations around walking trail
- Trim and prune all trees and bushes
- Bring all landscaping up to a beautiful standard
- Make walking trails look great
- Help CU move everything to new campus and setup with excellence
- Repair lawn and landscaping irrigation system
- Replace fluorescent lights with LEDs throughout
- Retrofit open office spaces to classrooms, library, etc.
- Install signage

Donors: Please consider making the most generous donation possible to help us with a variety of moving and transitions projects including these.

- Provide excellent technology infrastructure for almost 500,000 square feet: Digital technology is essential for CU success and a catalyst for quality innovation.
 - Enterprise servers
 - Data storage and backups
 - Network security with firewalls and intrusion detection systems
 - Wired and wireless networks
 - Hardware, software, and cloud services
 - Video conferencing systems
 - Classroom and meeting room equipment
- Retrofit open office spaces on multiple floors into classrooms, library, etc.
- Provide everything for classrooms including technology, podiums, chairs, etc.
- Provide everything for new library that will have something of a Barnes and Noble look
- Help pay for the moving costs to move an entire university
- Provide needed equipment for our beautiful new recording studio
 - High-quality, multi-channel audio mixer
 - High-definition professional grade studio video camera
 - Commercial grade video editing computer
- Signage
 - I ❤️ CU concrete sign in front of flag poles
 - Entrance signs at all entrances
 - Direction signage around entire campus and buildings
- Kayaks for students to use on lakes
- Additional picnic tables for picnic shelter
- Additional gazebos

Naming Opportunities: This transition will provide dozens of significant places to honor those who help make this transition happen. We would love to add your name or the name(s) of those you want to honor. You can also join forces with a group to collectively donate to honor someone special. I would enjoy speaking to you directly about these and other options. Call 336.714.7993 and ask to speak to the president about a special gift or naming opportunity.

- Classrooms – Gift range: \$75,000 - \$150,000 (depending on size of classroom). The name would be on a nice plaque by the door of the classroom
- Call Center – Gift: \$100,000 – The name will be displayed on a plaque by the entrance and prominently displayed on a wall in the extensive call center.
- Chapel – Gift: \$250,000 – The name will be displayed on a plaque by the entrance and prominently displayed inside the chapel.
- Barnes and Noble style study area and student center – Gift: \$500,000 – The name will be prominently displayed at entrances and inside.
- Café on one of the breezeways that connects the two buildings – Gift: \$100,000 – The name will be prominently displayed in the café.
- Conference Rooms – Gift: Varies – Donation levels will be based on room size.

- One of the two major buildings – Gift range: \$10M – The name will be displayed in large signage on all major entrances, and details about the person(s) named will be prominently available for all to read inside the main entrance.
- One of workout or exercise rooms – Gift range: \$25,000 - \$50,000 (depending on size of workout room) – The name would be on a nice plaque by the door of the workout room.
- One of the labs (chemistry, biology, electrical/electronic, computer, etc.) – Gift range: \$75,000 - \$250,000 – The name will be prominently displayed at entrances and inside.
- Academic schools – Gift range: \$2,500,000 – The name will be prominently displayed in entrances and key locations on campus, and the name and details of the person(s) honored would be on our website and literature in perpetuity.
- Huge American flag on giant flagpole – Gift range: \$75,000 – The name(s) would be on a plaque at the base of the huge flagpole that would fly a USA flag in the 50 ft x 80 ft range.
- Flag poles and international flags – Gift range: \$12,000 each – Our goal is to obey the great commission and teach all nations. There are approximately 200 nations on earth, and we plan to graduate key leaders from each one. We plan to install 200 flagpoles in beautiful ways around the campus and fly a flag for every country from whence we graduate at least one student. With each gift we will also give away one full scholarship to the first ministry student who enrolls from any new country where we do not already have a graduate. Donors will have the option of choosing a country for their flagpole, and their name(s) will be displayed on a plaque at the base of the flagpole. I will start by personally donating \$12,000 for the St. Vincent and Grenadines flagpole.
- Master of Arts in Ministry Full Ride Scholarship – Gift range: \$4,000 – Carolina University will triple each \$4,000 gift meaning that the students will be earning great ministry degrees at no charge. This is one of the most strategic world evangelism investments in the world. For only \$4,000, you can train a key leader who will impact thousands of others with the gospel and train numerous other leaders.
- Two-mile walking trail – Gift range: \$25,000 – We will repave, landscape, and beautify the trails. The name(s) will be prominently displayed at various trail entrances.
- Prayer garden – Gift range: \$50,000 – There is a beautiful, old-growth forest on one end of the campus. Our goal is to clean out all the underbrush and create prayer stations for faculty, staff, students, alumni, and believers from around the world to have a quiet place for prayer and meditation. The name(s) would be prominently displayed in key places.
- Museum – Gift range: To be determined – This will be a beautiful museum inside one of the buildings where we will tell the history and legacy of all seven colleges, universities, and seminaries that merged to create Carolina University.
- Coliseum – Gift range: To be determined – The goal is to build a beautiful coliseum that can be used for various sports and double as our major auditorium.
- Sports complex – Gift range: To be determined – The goal is to build a variety of soccer, baseball, and softball fields along with tennis courts, running tracks, etc. We will have eight acres across the street to develop this complex.
- Sports fields, courts, etc. – Gift range: To be determined
- Residence Halls – Gift range: To be determined

There will be many other naming opportunities, and I would love to chat with anyone to hear your story and learn about your interests. If there was ever a time when Carolina University needs our friends, alumni, and donors to help, this is it. If you are able to help with any of those things or in some other way that we haven't even thought about, please let us know by sending an email to president@carolinau.edu or calling (336) 714-7993.

Thank you for your love, prayers, and support,

Charles Petitt

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Charles Petitt", written in a cursive style.

President
Carolina University