



# THE PRESIDENTIAL INVESTITURE OF DR. STUART EDDINGS RAYFIELD

October 20, 2023  
Frank G. Lumpkin Jr. Center  
10:30 a.m.

# THE ALMA MATER

Hail to you, our  
Alma Mater.

Let us praise and  
thank you ever

For the guidance  
you have  
brought us

And the wisdom  
you have  
taught us.

Hail to you,  
Columbus State!

Hail to you,  
Columbus State!

*The Alma Mater* was  
rearranged by faculty member  
Kristen S. Hansen in 2016 for  
Dr. Christopher L. Markwood's  
presidential investiture.



The Whitley Clock Tower on Main Campus

# THE INVESTITURE CEREMONY

## PROCESSIONAL\*

*Procession of the Nobles from Mlada by Nicolai Rimsky-Korsakov  
Performed by the Schwob Wind Ensemble*

## ORDER OF THE PROCESSION

Dr. Jonathan Meyers, *Mace Bearer and Assistant Dean, College of Letters & Sciences*  
Presidents and Delegates from Institutions of Higher Education  
The University Faculty, The Council of Deans and The Executive Leadership Team

## PRESENTATION OF THE COLORS AND THE NATIONAL ANTHEM\*

Columbus State University ROTC Cougar Battalion Color Guard  
*The Star-Spangled Banner* arr. John Williams, performed by the Schwob Wind Ensemble and the Schwob Singers

## INVOCATION & MUSICAL RESPONSE

John Mitchell, *Student Leader, Wesley at CSU and Junior, English*  
*Alleluia* by Jake Runestad, performed by the Schwob Singers

## WELCOME

Dr. Pat McHenry, *Interim Provost & Executive Vice President*  
*Presiding*

## GREETINGS TO THE PRESIDENT

The Hon. R. Gary Allen '79  
*Mayor Pro Tem,  
City of Columbus, Georgia*

Mr. Adrian Peterson  
*President, Columbus State University  
Student Government Association*

Ms. Twilya Toombs '05  
*President, Columbus State University  
Alumni Association*

The Hon. Richard Smith  
*Georgia House of Representatives,  
District 139*

Ms. Lauren Cantrell '15  
*Chair, Columbus State University  
Staff Council*

Mr. Tim Money '86  
*Chair, Columbus State University  
Foundation Board of Trustees*

The Hon. Sanford Bishop  
*U.S. House of Representatives,  
Second House District*

Ms. Libby McFalls  
*Executive Officer, Columbus State  
University Faculty Senate*

Dr. C. Thomas Hopkins Jr.  
*Regent, University System of Georgia  
and Chair, Presidential Search &  
Screen Committee*

Maj. Gen. Curtis A. Buzzard  
*Commanding General,  
U.S. Army Maneuver Center of  
Excellence and Fort Moore*

Mr. Harold Reynolds  
*Chair, Board of Regents,  
University System of Georgia*

*\* please stand as you are able*

## **MUSICAL PERFORMANCE**

*Festive Overture* by Dmitri Shostakovich, performed by the Schwob Wind Ensemble

## **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE OCCASION AND INTRODUCTION OF PRESIDENT RAYFIELD**

Dr. Frank D. Brown, *President Emeritus*

## **INVESTITURE OF THE PRESIDENT**

Dr. Sonny Perdue, *Chancellor, University System of Georgia*

## **INVESTITURE ADDRESS**

President Stuart E. Rayfield

## **ALMA MATER\***

Performed by the Schwob Singers  
*words on the inside front cover*

## **RECESSIONAL\***

*Procession of the Nobles from Mlada* by Nicolai Rimsky-Korsakov  
Performed by the Schwob Wind Ensemble

*\* please stand as you are able*

# **THE PROCESSIONAL PARTY**

## **Council of Deans**

Dr. Wanda Ebright  
*College of the Arts*

Dr. Alan Karass  
*Columbus State University Libraries*

Dr. Deborah Kidder  
*D. Abbott Turner College of  
Business & Technology*

Dr. Cindy Ticknor  
*Honors College*

Dr. Annice Yarber-Allen  
*College of Letters & Sciences*

Dr. Margie Yates  
*College of Education & Health  
Professions (interim); and  
Research & Graduate School*

## **Executive Leadership Team**

Mr. Craig Burgess, Esq.  
*General Counsel*

Maj. Gen. (ret.) Patrick Donahoe  
*Special Assistant to the President for  
Military Liaison*

Dr. Rocky Kettering, CFRE  
*Vice President for University  
Advancement*

Mr. Theodore Laskaris  
*Chief Information Officer*

Dr. Pat McHenry  
*Interim Provost &  
Executive Vice President*

Dr. Aaron "Chip" Reese  
*Interim Vice President for  
Enrollment Management*

Mr. Rick Sears, CPA, CGMA  
*Vice President for Business & Finance*

Dr. Gina Sheeks  
*Vice President for Student Affairs*

Mr. Jay Sparks  
*Interim Director of Athletics*

Dr. Ronald Williams  
*Chief of Staff*

# MUSICIANS

Today's musicians are students and faculty from the College of the Arts' Joyce & Henry Schwob School of Music.

## SCHWOB WIND ENSEMBLE

Dr. Jamie L. Nix, *Conductor*  
*Director of Wind Ensemble Activities and the*  
*Hal J. Gibson Distinguished Chair in Conducting*

### STUDENT PERFORMERS

#### Flute

Jordi Banitt  
Julian Ramirez Eusebio  
Brissa Fraire  
Colleen Welsh  
Jennifer Willis

#### Oboe

Luis Miguel de Leon  
Ivan Ruiz  
Thomas Trinh

#### Bassoon

Christian Alvord  
Joshua Solis

#### Clarinet

Jonathan Anuforo  
Quinton Benner  
Megan Castaneda  
Josh Kelley  
Adrian Locklear  
Kyra Strakes  
Jennifer Saavedra Tovar  
Hudson Weber

#### Saxophone

Kelcey Davis  
Eric De La Torre  
Matthew Siegmund  
Raymond Wilkerson

#### Horn

Dylan Estella  
Garrison Fox  
Trent Ice  
Sophie O'Brien  
Nathan Page

#### Trumpet

Luis Mora  
Noah Newsome  
Addison Poor  
Annalise Rosati  
Samuel Tolbert  
Connor Williams

#### Trombone

Anthony Cangemi  
Austin Murray  
Nathan Stanfield, bass

#### Euphonium

Evan O'Dell  
Stephen Owens

#### Tuba

Bryant Fair  
Anthony Lowe

#### Percussion

Ashton Charles  
Gary Gordon  
Diego Montes  
Sebastian Ocando  
Angel Valenzuela  
Lucas White

## SCHWOB SINGERS

Dr. David Hahn, *Conductor*  
*Director of Choral Activities and the*  
*Paul S. & Jean R. Amos Distinguished Chair in Music*

### STUDENT PERFORMERS

#### Soprano

Alyssa Cornelius  
Aaliyah Coronado  
Natalie Crosby  
Marina Daniels  
Simone Gordon  
LaMyah Monteleone  
Sierra Reis  
Grace Rivord  
Rachel Ward

#### Tenor

AJ Gaines  
Josh Harris  
Zachary Hornbeck  
Logan Lambert  
Brandon Tharp  
Trenton Tolbert  
Jake Wood

#### Alto

Izannah Bailey  
Morgan Irby  
Meghan Moore  
Aimee Pugh  
Ashley Requeno  
Jada Smith  
Joselyn Ventura  
Lou Walker

#### Bass

Colin Daniell  
Logan Gordy  
Joshua Jones  
David Rambo Serrano  
Jacob Tabatowski-Bush  
Jake Taylor  
Makoa Whitfield

## SPECIAL THANKS

Columbus State University extends a special thanks to its community partners and supporters for their help with today's Presidential Investiture Ceremony.

*Assistant Marshals:*

Dr. Kimberly Gill, *Chair*  
*School of Policy, Justice &*  
*Public Safety*

Dr. Bryan Banks, *Chair*  
*Department of History,*  
*Geography & Philosophy*

Columbus State University Presidential Envoys

Schomburg's Jewelers



## COLUMBUS STATE UNIVERSITY'S FORMER PRESIDENTS



**1958 to 1979**

Dr. Thomas Y.  
Whitley



**1980 to 1987**

Dr. Francis J.  
Brooke



**1988 to 2008**

Dr. Frank D.  
Brown



**2008 to 2014**

Dr. Timothy S.  
Mescon



**2015 to 2022**

Dr. Christopher L.  
Markwood

## THE PRESIDENTIAL INVESTITURE CEREMONY

University presidential investiture ceremonies, steeped in tradition and protocol, signify the beginning of a new chapter of the institution's leadership. They allow the university community to celebrate this new chapter and to show the new president support. They also feature delegates from other colleges and universities to attend and honor the new president — a tradition dating back to medieval Europe and continued in the earliest days of colonial America. During the ceremony, new presidents articulate their vision for the university and its future. The official transfer of leadership to the new president is indicated by the presentation of the presidential medallion and the donning of the university's official colors as part of the president's regalia.

## THE UNIVERSITY MACE AND PRESIDENTIAL MEDALLION

The word "mace" is derived from the Latin word *mateola*, meaning mallet or staff. In the Middle Ages, these staffs, with a ball of steel or brass at one end, were used as weapons against armored warriors. As the weapons of war became more sophisticated, the mace evolved from an instrument of battle to a symbol of authority and power. Universities in Europe adopted the mace as a symbol of authority and unity. This tradition has continued to the present day, and many institutions of higher learning use the mace in a ceremonial capacity.

Originally designed and constructed by Jamie Howard, at the time a Columbus State professor of art, the mace and medallion are two symbols of the office of the president. Commissioned by the Columbus State University Foundation, the university mace and the presidential medallion were first used in the inauguration of Dr. Frank D. Brown as the university's third president. The mace is constructed of rosewood, Bastogne walnut and sterling silver.

The medallion, augmented in 2012 with a chain and bronze border reflective of the university seal, is worn by the president at commencement and other ceremonial occasions. The silver part of the medallion bears a representation of the tree of knowledge.



## ABOUT PRESIDENT RAYFIELD

Dr. Stuart Eddings Rayfield was named Columbus State University's sixth president by the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia on March 9, 2023. She began her official tenure on June 1, 2023.

An Alabama native, Dr. Rayfield earned a bachelor's degree in political science from Rhodes College in Memphis, Tennessee. She then earned a master's in higher education administration focused on student affairs from the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa before earning a doctorate in higher education administration focused on leadership, policy and organizations from Vanderbilt University in Nashville.

President Rayfield's original tenure at Columbus State began in 2006 as an assistant professor, later holding the Frank D. Brown Distinguished Chair in Servant Leadership. Along with teaching, she directed the Servant Leadership Program, co-led the SACSCOC reaffirmation of accreditation, and co-developed the Master of Science in Organizational Leadership program, Servant Leadership track in the D. Abbott Turner College of Business & Technology. In 2015, she was also named interim associate provost for undergraduate education.

A year later, she accepted the role as interim president of the former Bainbridge State College, where she co-led the college's consolidation with Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College. She then immediately stepped into the role of interim president of Gordon State College, leading the college's transition to new leadership.

In July 2018, President Rayfield was named the University System of Georgia's vice chancellor for leadership and institutional development — stepping away only briefly in late 2019 to serve as the interim president of the University of West Georgia. In 2022, she served as interim executive vice chancellor for academic affairs, overseeing the university system's entire academic enterprise. As vice chancellor for leadership and institutional development, President Rayfield led support for USG's 26 public colleges and universities as well as the University System Office in areas that include management, leadership transitions, and training and orientation.

Before her service to the University System of Georgia, she held positions at Auburn University, Vanderbilt University, Middle Tennessee State University (Murfreesboro), and the University of Alabama.

Dr. Rayfield is married to David Rayfield, a partner at the law firm Waldrep, Mullin & Callahan LLC in Columbus, and a graduate of Rhodes College and the University of Alabama. Together, they have two daughters: Vivian, a freshman at the Georgia Institute of Technology, and Celia, a junior at Columbus High School.



# PRESIDENTS AND DELEGATES FROM INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION\*

## BOARD OF REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF GEORGIA

1785  
**University of Georgia**  
Dr. S. Jack Hu  
Senior Vice President for  
Academic Affairs & Provost

1828  
**Augusta University**  
Dr. Neil MacKinnon  
Provost & Executive Vice President  
for Academic Affairs

1852  
**Gordon State College**  
Dr. Donald J. Green  
Interim President

1873  
**University of North Georgia**  
Dr. Michael P. Shannon  
President

1884  
**Middle Georgia State  
University**  
Dr. Christopher Blake  
President

1885  
**Georgia Institute of  
Technology**  
Bert Reeves, Esq.  
Vice President of Institute Relations

1879  
**Georgia Military College**  
Maj. Gen. (ret.) David Coburn  
Senior Vice President for  
Community College Operations

1833  
**Mercer University**  
Dr. Jean Sumner  
Dean, School of Medicine

1887  
**Troy University**  
Dr. Kerry Palmer  
Senior Vice Chancellor &  
Chief Academic Officer

1889  
**Georgia College &  
State University**  
Dr. Holley Roberts  
Associate Provost for Academic  
Affairs and Director of  
The Graduate School

1903  
**Albany State University**  
Dr. Marion Fredrick  
President

1906  
**Georgia Southern University**  
Dr. John Lester  
Vice President, University  
Communications & Marketing

1906  
**South Georgia State College**  
Dr. Gregory M. Tanner  
Interim President

1906  
**University of West Georgia**  
Dr. Russell Crutchfield  
Associate Vice President &  
Chief of Staff

1906  
**Valdosta State University**  
Dr. Sheri Noviello  
Interim Provost & Vice President  
for Academic Affairs

1908  
**Abraham Baldwin  
Agricultural College**  
Dr. Tracy Brundage  
President

1961  
**College of Coastal Georgia**  
Dr. Michelle Johnston  
President

1961  
**Columbus Technical College**  
Martha Ann Todd  
President

1963  
**Dalton State College**  
Dr. John M Fuchko III  
President

1963  
**Kennesaw State University**  
Dr. Kathy Schwaig  
President

1969  
**Clayton State University**  
Dr. Ashlee Spearman  
Associate Vice President of  
Enrollment & Student Success

1970  
**Georgia Highlands College**  
Dr. P. Mike Hobbs  
President

1973  
**Chattahoochee Valley  
Community College**  
Jacqueline Screws  
President

1973  
**East Georgia State College**  
Dr. David L. Schechter  
President

1974  
**Atlanta Metropolitan  
State College**  
Dr. Ingrid Thompson-Sellers  
President

2005  
**Georgia Gwinnett College**  
Dr. George S. Low  
Senior Vice President for Academic  
& Student Affairs and Provost

Harold Reynolds, *Chair*  
Erin Hames, *Vice Chair*  
Doug Aldridge  
Tom Bradbury  
Richard "Tim" Evans  
W. Allen Gudenrath  
Bárbara Rivera Holmes  
Samuel D. Holmes  
C. Thomas Hopkins Jr., M.D.  
James M. Hull  
Cade Joiner  
Patrick C. Jones  
C. Everett Kennedy III  
Sarah-Elizabeth Langford  
Lowery Houston May  
Jose R. Perez  
Neil L. Pruitt Jr.  
T. Dallas Smith  
James K. Syfan III

## PRESIDENTIAL SEARCH & SCREEN COMMITTEE

Regent C. Thomas Hopkins Jr.,  
*Chair*  
Jordan Allen  
Victoria Buchanan  
Stephen T. Butler  
Marvin Crumbs, Ed.D.  
Larry Dooley, Ph.D.  
Regent W. Allen Gudenrath  
Floyd Jackson, Ph.D.  
William Keen  
Troy Keller, Ph.D.  
Ashley May  
Lydia Ray, Ph.D.  
Regent Harold Reynolds  
Gwen Ruff  
Natalia Temesgen  
Teddie Ussery  
Cortney Wilson  
Steven Wright, Ph.D.  
Jimmy Yancey

\* as of Oct. 10, 2023; year  
accompanying each institution is  
the year it was founded



## **COLUMBUS STATE UNIVERSITY ALUMNI ASSOCIATION**

### **Officers**

Twilya Toombs '05, *President*  
Lionel Haynes Jr. '06,'07, *Vice President*  
Michelle McIntire '94, *Secretary*  
Cortney Wilson '11,'12, *Immediate Past President*  
Katie Evans '11,'13, *Executive Director*

### **Directors**

Matt Andrade '97  
Pops Barnes '01  
Christopher Bass '19, '21  
Marvia Bright '20  
David Britt '03  
Al Bruni '82  
Donald Bush '81  
Marvin Crumbs '94,'97  
Quent DeLoach '10,'13,'17  
Mary Garcia-Bowie '15, '17  
Jessica Ferriter '16  
Jacqueline Flakes '94,'96  
DeWayne Harris '14  
Carlie Hinson '16,'18  
Melissa Ingle Hammer '05  
Troy Jackson '11  
Tom Kirkbride '01,'05  
Candice Lawrence '13  
Amber Massey '97,'98  
Cassie Myers '12  
Judy Nail '73,'76  
Ericka Parker '07  
Gwen Ruff '88  
De'Ana Singletary '07,'15  
Ben Thames '97

## **COLUMBUS STATE UNIVERSITY FOUNDATION**

### **Officers**

Tim Money '86, *Board Chair*  
Todd Schuster, *Treasurer, Chair, Finance & Audit Committee*  
Lula Huff, *Secretary*  
Steve Butler, *Chair, Partnership Committee*  
Janet Davis '80,'81, *Chair, Trusteeship Committee*  
David Hart '77, *Chair, Investment Committee*  
Jack Key, *Chair, Development Committee*  
Will White, *CSU Foundation Properties Inc. Liaison*  
Teddie Ussery, *Immediate Past Chair*  
Stuart E. Rayfield, Ed.D., *Member-At-Large*  
Rocky Kettering, Ed.D., CFRE, *Executive Director (ex officio)*

### **Trustees**

Emory Alexander '74  
Jay Alexander '01  
Wade Burford '78  
Nancy Buntin '68  
Nora Garrard  
Mark Hudson '83  
Dian Naman  
Allen Pettis '92  
Lynne Phillips '83,'88  
Alan Rothschild '14  
Gwen Ruff '88  
Frank Schley  
John Shinkle  
Pam Siddall '91  
Richard Smith '75  
Brad Turner  
Sherry Wade  
Chris Woodruff

Jack Pezold  
Lamar Powers '67,'70  
Bill Reaves '66  
Otis Scarborough  
Sydney Smith  
Allen Taber '77  
Phil Tomlinson  
Jimmy Yancey '64

### **Honorary**

Mrs. Richard Hallock  
The Hon. Calvin Smyre

### **Associate**

Libby McFalls  
2023-24 *Executive Officer,*  
*CSU Faculty Senate*  
Twilya Toombs '05  
*President,*  
*CSU Alumni Association*  
Cortney Wilson '11,'12  
*President,*  
*CSU Athletic Association*  
Jerald Mitchell  
*President/CEO,*  
*Greater Columbus*  
*Chamber of Commerce*

### **Emeritus**

Jim Blanchard  
Patty Cardin '94  
Greg Davis  
Jean Hartin '72  
Bill Heard  
Bob Koon  
Lev Norman

## CELEBRATING STUDENT CREATIVITY

In honor of President Rayfield's investiture and in conjunction with today's ceremony, the CSU Alumni Association commissioned original artwork created by Columbus State University students and depicting what the university means to them. The students were open to using whatever artistic medium best suited that expression.

These creative works are on display today in the Lumpkin Center's lobby. They also will be made available in other campus locations after today's ceremony as a gift to the university community commemorating this special occasion.



### "CULTIVATING COMMUNITY"

**Artist:** Campbell Eubanks, senior, fine arts, Columbus, Georgia

#### About the work:

To express the profound impact Columbus State University has had on my life, I created a functional vase that can be used for years to come. Much like a phoenix rising from the ashes, the shape of the vase is modeled after a traditional Chinese porcelain style called Fengweizun. The porcelain material signifies the exceptional education I have received so far. On the top register, I included circular cameos of our school's brand pillars that have been reiterated throughout my years at CSU. The main face of the vase depicts the most significant takeaway from my academic journey: community. The people — from classmates to faculty and staff — have all contributed positively to my growth as an artist, a student and an individual. For me, this vase serves as a testament to me of the importance of human connections in education and beyond.



### "AWAKENED TO ECLIPSING BEAUTY"

**Artist:** Emma Gaines, junior, fine arts, Columbus, Georgia

#### About the work:

I wanted to communicate my love for Columbus and how that affects my art. I wanted to convey just how lush and bright the scenery is looking across the Chattahoochee River. My other goal was to reflect how art education affects the way I view my surroundings; instead of a picture-perfect rendition of trees, water and the Dillingham Street Bridge, I wanted to show the scene as it feels to an art-enamored student in 2023.



## **"FLYING TO ANOTHER HOME"**

**Artist:** Vinh Huynh, senior, fine arts, Vietnam

### **About the work:**

I created this piece to represent my journey coming to America, Columbus, and Columbus State — carrying my "American Dream." The RiverPark Campus is where I have spent much of my time over the years, and it is like my second home. The dove symbolizes my dreams and my journey of flying to the United States from Vietnam.

## **"COMMUNITY TO THE CORE"**

**Artist:** Greysen Strumpler, senior, art education, Waverly Hall, Georgia

### **About the work:**

For my piece, I really wanted to focus on the community aspect of Columbus State. There are so great things I can say regarding CSU, but I feel that at the core of all of those things is community and the love for one another that CSU fosters. Community and love for each other within that community is essential for other good things to grow because all other good things — opportunities, success, empathy, grace — are the results of first caring for one another.



## **"GUIDANCE"**

**Artist:** Shulin Zheng, senior, art with a focus in graphic design, China

### **About the work:**

I wanted to show my appreciation for Columbus State University's faculty members in my piece. It depicts them guiding students, like how the cougar is leading her cubs. At CSU, I see how much the faculty want to help students succeed. They are always so caring and accepting. At CSU, I have been able to make great friends, and I want to see us head to a brighter future.

# OUR HISTORY

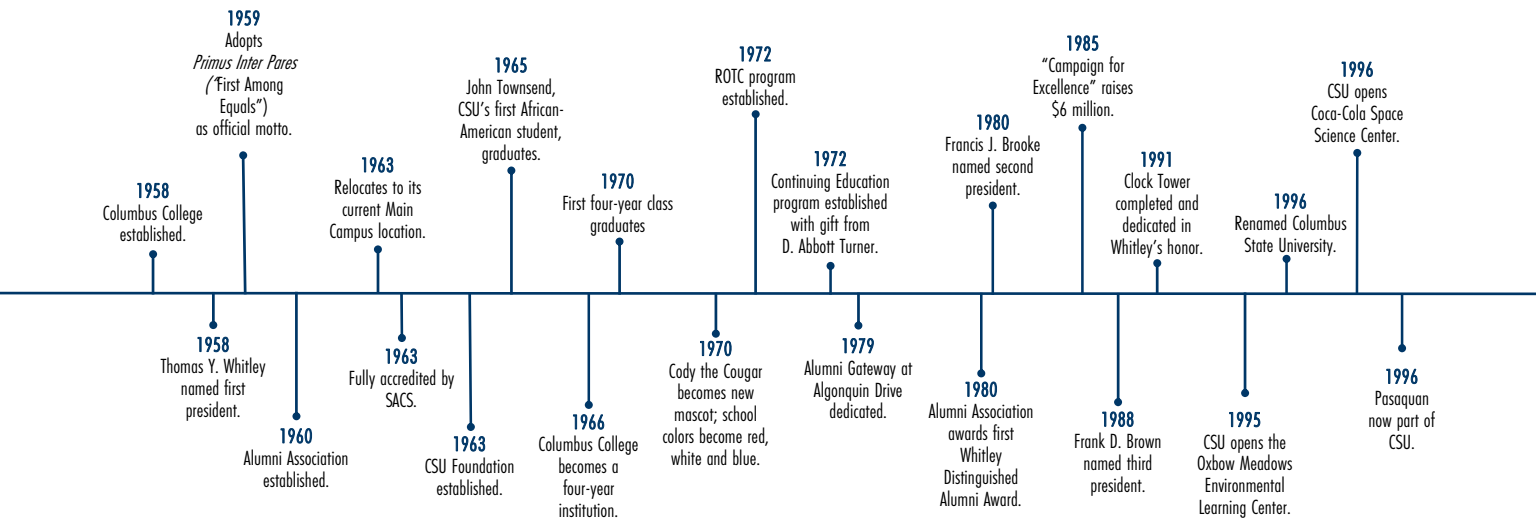
**Columbus State University has been woven into the fabric of the Chattahoochee Valley for more than 60 years.**

As early as the 1940s, local leaders identified that having a Columbus-based college was a priority. They began collecting money, looking for a site, and lobbying the state for a local college. Through their persistence, donations of nearly \$100,000, and the support of two voter-approved bond issues, Columbus College first opened on Sept. 22, 1958, in a temporary location — the Shannon Hosiery Mill on Talbotton Road. Nearly 300 students enrolled under the care of 15 faculty members and six administrators.

Those humble beginnings began a story that spans more than six decades of a deeply rooted relationship between what is now Columbus State University and the Chattahoochee Valley. Columbus College moved to its current Main Campus location in 1963 and became a four-year institution just two years later.

Campus master planning hit its stride in the early 1980s as construction expanded to match the growth in CSU’s new collegiate structure and academic offerings. The late 1980s marked additional capital growth on campus, including the school’s signature clock tower—completed in 1991 and named after its first president, Dr. Thomas Whitley. In 1996, the college was designated as a university and became Columbus State University.

Despite widespread higher education budget cuts marking the late 2000s, Columbus State University continued to prosper. This included establishing several new graduate programs — including its first doctoral degree — and its inaugural appearance on *U.S. News & World Report’s* list as one of the top 50 comprehensive public universities in the South. During this time, CSU also strengthened its relationship with U.S. Army Fort Moore, expanded its online degree offerings, added NCAA and club sports, and established the Honors College.

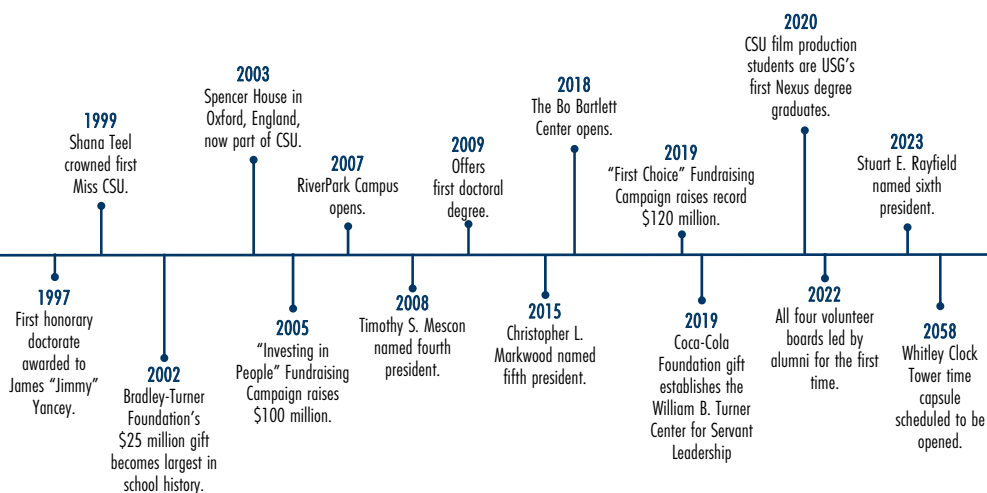


Since 2000, Columbus State has concluded two successful comprehensive fundraising campaigns. The "Investment in People" Campaign, which exceeded its \$67 million goal by nearly 50%, wrapped in 2005. In 2012, CSU's "First Choice" Campaign concluded after exceeding its \$100 million goal by 20% with the support of more than 8,000 alumni and community donors.

CSU experienced additional integration with the Columbus community in 2007 with its new RiverPark Campus near the banks of the Chattahoochee River in historic Uptown. Today, the urban campus includes much of the university's fine, performing and communication arts programs and facilities; is home to the College of the Arts, the College of Education & Health Professions and many of its outreach centers; and offers students learning, living and dining options in addition to those on Main Campus.

In recent years, CSU has broadened its creativity, innovation and efficiency in its academic, operational and outreach efforts. This includes an intentional focus on servant leadership as both an institutional core value and an academic discipline. This innovative spirit has led to new workforce development-focused degree programs and increased standings in many national educational ranking programs.

During its 60-plus-year history, the university has been under the leadership of six presidents — including its current president, Dr. Stuart Rayfield, who began her tenure on June 1, 2023.



## OUR MISSION

Columbus State University will empower individuals to contribute to the advancement of local and global communities through an emphasis on excellence in teaching and research, lifelong learning, cultural enrichment, public/private partnerships and service to others.

## OUR VISION

Columbus State University will be a model of empowerment through transformational learning experiences that prepare students to serve the world as creative problem-solvers and high impact leaders.

## OUR CORE VALUES

*Excellence:* Commitment to best practices in teaching and learning, scholarship and creative activity, student engagement, cultural enrichment and campus environment.

*Creativity:* The pursuit of distinction through inquiry and innovation, challenging convention and focusing on solutions.

*Engagement:* Active civil participation by students, faculty and staff in the university experience.

*Sustainability:* Commitment to behaviors that recognize and respect our environmental context.

*Inclusion:* Fostering and promoting a campus that embraces diverse people, ideas, views and practices.

*Servant Leadership:* Effective, ethical leadership through empowerment and service.



## A CLOSING WORD FROM PRESIDENT RAYFIELD

Thank you for attending the investiture today. I am thrilled to have you on our beautiful campus to celebrate this institution. I am honored to serve as Columbus State University's sixth president. Below is an excerpt from my cover letter when I applied for this position. The excerpt captures my answer to the question "Why CSU?" I suspect many of you would answer this question similarly.

*Columbus State University's relationship with its community, Columbus and the Chattahoochee Valley is unrivaled. The relationship must not be taken for granted and should be mutually beneficial. I have heard current Chancellor Perdue remark something to the effect of "as goes higher education in the state of Georgia, so goes the state economy for the next generation." This is true for Columbus State and Columbus, Georgia. CSU is essential to maintaining and growing the workforce of Columbus and the Chattahoochee Valley region. As such, the importance of the partnerships between the community and the institution cannot be overstated.*

*The educational mission of Fort Moore\* and the Maneuver Center of Excellence as the integral training center for a combat-ready Army makes Fort Moore a critical partner with CSU. Columbus State University has aligned some of its academic programs with work being done at Fort Moore, including the new Robotics Engineering degree, the Master of Science in Organizational Leadership, and a variety of fully online degrees that accommodate deployments and relocations. As over 100,000 individuals live, work and affiliate with Fort Moore, there is a strategic opportunity to continue to expand partnerships that meet the educational and workforce needs of the military and specifically, Fort Moore.*

*Also unique to Columbus and Columbus State is their creative and innovative spirits. Both the community and the university have an entrepreneurial mindset that has produced a culture of dreaming big, taking risks, working hard, and achieving success. From Aflac, to Synovus, to the W.C. Bradley Co., to the RiverCenter, to the Springer, to TSYS/Global Payments, to the*

*consolidated government, to Whitewater, to hundreds of successful small businesses, to the Muscogee County School District (MCSD), to the Community Foundation of the Chattahoochee Valley, to Columbus Technical College, to Uptown Columbus, to Midtown, Inc., to Mercy Med, and to Columbus State University (and the list could go on and on), the "can-do" attitude and fortitude has enabled all of these entities to succeed and surpass expectations. That spirit permeates through the Columbus State faculty, staff and students in writing and producing feature films and original works; in achieving Georgia Peach certification for sustainable energy usage; in approving and graduating the first Nexus degree ever; in offering a for-credit comprehensive leadership development program; in securing guaranteed contracts at MCSD for graduates of CSU's education program who meet the necessary requirements; in winning the most Peach Belt Conference Commissioner's Cups in history; in winning a Nautilus Book Award that specifically addresses research in the scholarship of teaching and learning; and in serving as the home to centers of excellence such as the Coca-Cola Space Science Center, Oxbow Meadows, and the Carson McCullers Center for Writers and Musicians (and the list could go on and on). A genuine sense of opportunity abounds. I had the fortune of working with Mr. Bill Turner, the late retired chairman and CEO for the W.C. Bradley Co., while I was at Columbus State. The lessons in leadership I learned from him through his stories cannot be fully articulated, but one of the things that always lit up his face was when he talked about people coming to him following a successful endeavor for the community and saying, "What are WE going to do next?" It is that spirit that makes Columbus and Columbus State University unique and what can propel its future.*

WE are Better Together. Thank you for your support of this incredible institution and this amazing community.

*\*original letter dated Jan. 6, 2023, referred to Fort Benning, since renamed Fort Moore.*

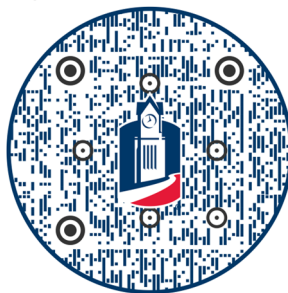
# PRESIDENT'S INNOVATION FUND

To coincide with the beginning of her tenure and her investiture, President Rayfield has established the President's Innovation Fund. Charitable gifts to this fund will equip her and other university leaders to promptly implement newly identified strategic and tactical opportunities that enhance our students' experiences, grow the impact of our faculty and programs, and partner more effectively with our broader community.

Tax-deductible gifts to the fund can be made online at

**[columbusstate.edu/  
presidentsinnovationfund](https://columbusstate.edu/presidentsinnovationfund)**

or by scanning the accompanying QR code.



Contributions by **mail** should be made out to the CSU Foundation with "President's Innovation Fund" noted on the check or money order, and mailed to:

CSU Foundation, 4225 University Ave., Columbus, GA 31907

For questions or to discuss **other giving methods** to support the President's Innovation Fund, contact the Office of University Advancement at 706.507.8956.

"Now more than ever, students and their future employers require universities like ours to be on the leading edge of knowledge and experience — no matter the discipline. To me, that means being nimble, and **by supporting this President's Innovation Fund, our alumni, friends and partners can invest in making Columbus State more responsive and adaptive** to the needs of our students, faculty, staff and community."

— President Rayfield

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