



A CHAT WITH PRESIDENT GEORGE BENSON

Q: How would you describe your leadership approach?

A: I would say that it's consultative. I try to build consensus – both internally and externally. I want everyone to feel like they're playing on the same team.

I try to create and maintain an environment of openness, transparency and, above all else, trust. I think of myself as a facilitator and coach, someone who supports and nurtures the important work of our faculty and staff.

Q: What attracted you to the College of Charleston?

A: The fact that this campus is student centered with a strong faculty and a public mission was very attractive. I also like the connection to the city of Charleston, the Lowcountry and the state of South Carolina. Being in the heart of historic Charleston creates so many exciting educational and research opportunities for our students and faculty.

Also, the trajectory of the College is so promising, particularly with respect to new facilities and the increasing quality and geographic diversity of the students. I am also attracted by the challenge to increase the College's resources and to protect and improve the trajectory.

Q: You have a long history of leadership in the academic setting. What are some of the lessons you have learned that you hope to implement at the College of Charleston?

A: One lesson I've learned is how important it is to develop a collective vision and communicate it widely to alumni, friends and the local and state communities.

Second, it's vitally important to align the incentives and resources of the organization to the goals you're working toward. Otherwise, you will never achieve the vision.

It's also important to understand and appreciate the dual obligation of public academic institutions. On one hand, we are responsible to the academic community both within the College and around the world for nurturing high-quality scholarship; on the other hand, we are responsible to the state of South Carolina and society at large. We have been entrusted by society with the task of developing the state's and the nation's scientists, business leaders, physicians, musicians, lawyers and so on. In every decision we make at the College, we must consider both what is best for the academy and best for society.

Another lesson: Faculty and staff should be thought of as a portfolio of valuable assets. Each person has unique talents and interests that should be developed and supported rather than repressed. The quality of the College's programs can be maximized by encouraging each person to do what he or she does best. One-size-fits-all approaches to faculty and staff evaluation are not appropriate.

Q: How do you anticipate your daily routine to be at the College in comparison with your routine at Terry College of Business?

A: Both jobs are essentially 24/7. I'll do many of the same activities from day to day with respect to relationship building and fund raising, but I foresee having more involvement with students and faculty than at UGA, particularly in my first year on the job. I've got a lot to learn about the College of Charleston, and the best way to get up to speed is to get involved.

CONT'D INSIDE



SPARE TIME: Michelle Smith Bowls to Win

For most of us, the bowling alley is a cheaper version of the amusement park, where the sounds of beeping arcade games, crashing pins and dropping balls merge with the smells of pizza, hotdogs and cigarette smoke.

Director of Institutional Research Michelle Smith (B.S. '91, M.S. '92), however, is not like most of us. For Smith, who was inducted into the Charleston Women's Bowling Association Hall of Fame last March, the bowling alley is the playing field where she meets friends and rivals for practice and competition.

"Most of my friends are bowlers," she says, carefully painting her right thumb with Super Glue to keep it from getting tender and then drying her hand at the ball return. "That's how it's always been for me."

A bowler by age 6 and in a league by age 8, Smith "literally grew up" in the Charleston Air Force Base bowling center. As a youth bowler, she consistently bowled the highest series in the state, holding state records and winning medals year after year. At the age of 17, she was the first female to bowl a 600 series at the base's bowling center, and her name is still on its Wall of Fame.

"I took it so seriously back then," Smith admits, choosing one of the

three balls with custom-drilled finger holes from her wheeled, black-and-silver bowling bag. "I don't think of it as something that I have a lot riding on now, so I've been able to relax. That's actually helped me bowl better."

Don't let Smith fool you. She still takes bowling seriously and is still very competitive. She bowled the highest series in all of South Carolina for the 2005-06 season, was tournament champion at both the February and June 2006 Ladies Palmetto Scratch Tournaments and is one of two females in the Greater Charleston Bowling Association to bowl an 800 series. She bowled her highest game (299) just last fall and is currently training for her third trip to the U.S. Bowling Congress Women's Championships and her first trip to the Queens Tournament, both of which will be held in Charlotte this spring.

"I guess I'd say I'm at a high point in my career," Smith says. "I'm happy with where I am, but I'm always improving and I can always do better."

That said, Smith turns toward the lane, makes her approach and releases the ball with the ease and technique of a practiced and skilled bowler. With all the pins down, she turns back and smiles: "I wouldn't keep bowling if it weren't still fun." 

WELCOME TO THE portico

I'm happy to welcome you to the first issue of *The Portico*, the new employee newsletter for the College of Charleston. Like an architectural portico, such as the one that serves as an entrance to Randolph Hall, this monthly newsletter is your entry, your access, to the College community. Inside, you will find information about campus news, events and issues that affect you, as well as opportunities to get to know the other people who call the College "work."

As your portal to vital information, *The Portico* highlights news and events that are pertinent to all employees. With stories about the people on campus, their jobs and even their lives outside of work, *The Portico* also seeks to help all of us get to know each other a little better.

I sincerely hope that you enjoy *The Portico* and find it useful. This is your publication, and the door is open for your suggestions. If you have ideas about how the publication can be better, please let

me know. And I'm always looking for a good story – so whether it's news, an upcoming event or your co-worker's award-winning yo-yo collection, don't hesitate to contact me.

Thank you, and welcome to *The Portico*!

— Alicia Lutz



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OFF THE RECORD

Ombudsperson JoAnn Diaz Provides Informal Conflict Resolution

If only every household had an ombudsperson – a neutral, nonjudgmental, independent, confidential entity to listen to the issues and conflicts that arise and to calmly explain the options available and the consequences of each. Can you imagine how many silent treatments and slamming doors could be avoided?

While you may be on your own at home, the College of Charleston does provide such a service to students, staff and faculty. In her new role as the College's ombudsperson, JoAnn Diaz provides informal and confidential consultation, explaining the College's policies and procedures and empowering her patrons to make well-informed decisions about how to resolve their problems.

"I help them see the various options available to them," Diaz says. "Once they know what the procedures are and what their choices are, they are in more control of their problem and they can make the best decision for all parties involved."

The Ombuds Office operates independently of administrative authorities and does not participate in any formal proceedings, take sides, make judgments or impose resolutions. Perhaps the most important aspect of the Ombuds Office, however, is its confidentiality. "Everything is off the record because there's no record to be kept," Diaz says. "This is not an office of notice, meaning that, unless someone is in imminent danger, no complaints are filed and nothing is disclosed."



The need for an informal and confidential route was brought to Diaz's attention during her five years as the director of the College's Office of Human Relations and Minority Affairs, which is where complaints of discrimination and harassment based on sex, race, religion, national origin, creed, disability or age are formally filed.

"Human relations was seeing so many people who didn't know their options but who didn't really want to formally file a complaint or pursue any legal action," Diaz explains. "They just wanted to vent. Now they have me to vent to."

Since taking on the position last spring, Diaz has honed her multitasking skills as she's seen a lot of people with a lot of different problems, from

disputes about performance evaluations to sexual harassment and other interpersonal conflicts.

"It doesn't matter what the problem is – if it's big to you, it's important. I'm here to listen." 

The Ombuds Office is located in Randolph Hall, Suite 305. JoAnn Diaz may be reached at 953-5580 and at ombuds@cofc.edu, though e-mail should never be considered a confidential communication method.

The Ombuds Office will be offering policy and procedure workshops for faculty and staff later this semester. Details will be announced at a later date.



ON THE MOVE

- The School of Humanities and Social Sciences administrative offices have moved to 2 Greenway. All contact information has remained the same. According to Dean Cynthia Lowenthal, the staff is enjoying the historic beauty of the new offices, as well as all the technological amenities.
- The School of Education's move to 86 Wentworth has been postponed until March 2-4, 2007.

GARDENER'S PICK



Japanese Fatsia

NAME: Japanese fatsia, Japanese aralia, *fatsia japonica*.

ON CAMPUS: Found all over campus, including the south side of 5 College Way and in front of Robert Scott Small Building.

DESCRIPTION: Hardy; glossy, fanlike leaves; flowers in late fall/early winter; black fruit appears in early spring.

Where to Plant: Shady corners; all soils, except soggy.



TIPS: Remove fruit to increase leaf size; cut back stalks in the early spring to rejuvenate and to showcase branch structure; wash leaves during dry spells to prevent insect attack; take cuttings between July and September.



CONT'D FROM FRONT PAGE

Q: What's on your agenda for your first 100 days at the College?

A: I will spend much time meeting with faculty, staff and students – listening, asking questions and getting to understand the strengths of the College and opportunities for improvement.

Q: What goals do you have for the campus community and how do you intend to motivate the community toward these goals?

A: I don't have a hard and fast vision at this point. That will take a year to develop. Generally

speaking, I will be advocating the highest possible quality in everything we do. I will also encourage the deans, department heads and faculty to be entrepreneurial, to develop programs and initiatives that pay for themselves and eventually generate revenue for the College. It is unlikely that the state will ever fund all of our needs. We need to help ourselves as much as possible, and that means more revenue-generating programs and more success in fund raising.

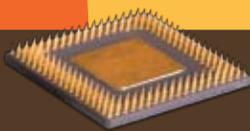
Q: You are known as an avid golfer. What is the best course you have played, what has been your best round and have you ever made a hole in one?

A: Best courses: Augusta National Golf Club and Oakmont Country Club (in Pa.). Best round: 69 at Bucknell Golf Club, where I grew up. Hole in one: I've had two, one in April 1968 at Bucknell Golf Club and the other in October 1999 at the Atlanta Athletic Club.

Q: Anything else you think the College should know about you?

A: I don't want people to be intimidated by boundaries. Think beyond your natural boundaries and always be inclusive. We need to take the College of Charleston to the world and invite the world to Charleston. **D**

TECHNO BYTES



BATTERY — The Best Administrative Technology That Ever Rocked You

The BATTERY Project is the College's effort to select and implement a new suite of interoperating administrative applications to replace SIS, FRS, HRS, FRED and many of the College's other programs that are increasingly outdated, inefficient or unsupported.

Once fully implemented in 2011, the new software will provide superior data integrity by allowing everyone – admissions, student records, finance, human resources, institutional advancement and so on – to work off the same data. The data will be stored in a single warehouse and accessed through the appropriate custom views. Ultimately, the software will offer streamlined business processes, infrastructure for effective data stewardship and a stronger basis for strategic planning.

Scheduled to begin in August, implementation will be staged gradually, with different phases affecting different departments at different times.

Check future issues of The Portico for the BATTERY Project's progress and for opportunities for you to help define requirements for the new software. For more information about BATTERY, contact Sr. VP/CIO for Technology Bob Cape at 953-6402.

UNDER CONSTRUCTION



- The George Street project is still on track for an August 2007 completion. In February the scaffolding will be removed and the interior sheetrock and flooring will be installed.

- The School of the Arts is on target for a March 2008 completion. All 288 piles have been driven, and this month form work will begin for grade beams and pile caps, and a tower crane will be installed.



- Construction has begun on the Carolina First Center and John Kresse Arena, which are scheduled for completion in fall 2008.

SAVE THE DATE

FINANCIAL HEALTH WORKSHOP:

Get some practical advice for a financially positive future.

When: Tuesday, February 6, 9:30–11:00 a.m.

Where: Human Resources Conference Room, Lightsey Center Basement

Fee: None

Contact: Linda McClenaghan, 953-8238, mcclenaghanl@cofc.edu

JOHNS ISLAND— THEN AND NOW:

Learn about the changing culture of Johns Island and how it will be affected by the currently planned urban development.

When: Thursday, February 22, 6:00–8:00 p.m.

Where: Marlene and Nathan Addlestone Library, Room 227

Fee: None

Contact: Cathy Evans, 953-8085, evansc@cofc.edu

HOMECOMING MEN'S BASKETBALL GAME:

Cheer the Cougars on as they take on The Citadel Bulldogs.

When: Thursday, February 22, 7:00 p.m.

Where: John Kresse Arena

Fee: Tickets Sold Out

Contact: Josh Bryson, 953-5479, brysonj@cofc.edu

SAFETY WALK:

Tour the campus and gather information from public safety about staying safe.

When: Thursday, February 28, 7:00 p.m.

Where: In front of the Stern Student Center

Fee: None

Contact: Student Government Association, 953-5722



Greg Dearing of residence life and housing sends the salt from Japanese artist Motoi Yamamoto's salt labyrinth back to sea. Dearing says the installation, which was displayed in the Marlene and Nathan Addlestone Library rotunda last fall as part of the *Force of Nature* exhibition, "really affected me in a neat way. I could really relate." That's because, like Yamamoto, who lost his sister to brain cancer, Dearing lost his father to brain cancer and his mother-in-law to stomach cancer. "Mr. Yamamoto said he hopes my heart has healed," Dearing says. "It's neat because he's on the other side of the ocean, and this is a kind of connection."



NEWS BRIEFS: News You Can Use

- **CARTA Express**, the new "park and ride" service with limited stops, began at the end of last month. Buses are now running from the following commuter locations to the corner of St. Philip and Calhoun Streets every half hour during peak morning and afternoon travel times with only 1–3 stops in between: **the Super K-Mart on Rivers Avenue in North Charleston; the Target at the Citadel Mall in West Ashley; the K-Mart at I-526 and Bowman Road in Mt. Pleasant; and the Old S-Mart/Berle at Grimball and Folly Roads on James Island.** Just park your car and ride the bus for free with your College of Charleston ID. For more information, visit www.whydrive.net or call CARTA at 724-7420.
- **Only for College employees:** At every women's home basketball game, there will be a drawing for two free tickets to the next men's home basketball game. All men's home games are sold out, so get your name in the pot at the sign-up table at the next women's home game!
- The deadline for nominating the **Southern Association of Student Employment Administrators (SASEA) Student Employee of the Year** is February 15. Nominations should be based on student employees' reliability, quality of work, initiative, attitude, professionalism and uniqueness of contribution. To make a nomination, please contact Kristine Barry or Jessica Krasny at 953-5692.
- **The Office of Career Services** has changed its name to the **Career Center.** The e-mail address has changed to careercenter@cofc.edu.

GUESS WHAT??



It's time to show off your detective skills!

Every issue of *The Portico* will showcase a puzzling photo for you to decipher. We may choose to stump you with close-ups of objects or scenes that currently can be found on campus or with archived photos of campus events or scenes from days gone by. Whatever the photo, the premise is the same: Check out the photo, be the first to answer the accompanying question correctly and earn a special prize, some much-needed bragging rights and your name in the next issue of *The Portico*!

The object depicted in this photo can be found on campus right now. What is it? Be as specific as possible. Send your submission to lutza@cofc.edu by Monday, February 19, 2007. Please include your name and your department in the e-mail. The contest is open to all College faculty and staff. One submission per person, please.

WORD ON THE BRICKS

WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE SUPER BOWL TRADITION?

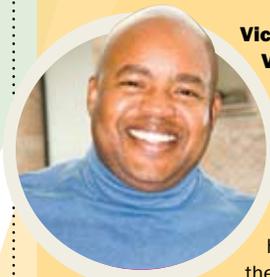
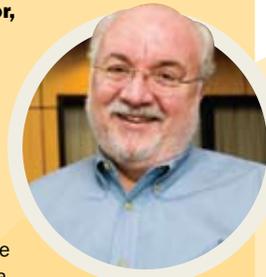


Linda McClenaghan,
Training Specialist,
Human Resources

"While my husband watches the game, I pull out my jar that holds the change I've collected all year, and I roll my coins. By the end of the game, I've generally made somewhere between \$100 or \$150 to deposit into my own special Super Bowl account!"

John Clarkin, Director,
Tate Center for
Entrepreneurship

"Raised in Pittsburgh, I like to join a small group of fellow fans for some authentic Pittsburgh food (Primanti Brothers-style sandwiches or Kielbasa sausages) and one Iron City beer. Although I do have more than just one beer on Super Bowl Sunday, I never liked that particular brand, but I'll have one Iron City just for the sake of tradition."



Victor Wilson, Senior
Vice President,
Student Affairs

"Lemon pepper wings for the game and calling about 10 good friends to catch up at halftime since I know they will be home!"