



January 10, 2022

Dear faculty and staff,

Happy New Year and welcome back!

There's something about this time of year on campus. A special energy fills the air as we renew relationships and share adventures, joys, and even sorrows that may have occurred during the break from classes.

We enter 2022 encouraged by the successes of the past year and focused on meeting the challenges that lie before us.

In the past year, you demonstrated great resilience in the face of a pandemic that just wouldn't quit. Because of your inspiring ability to adapt and adjust, more than 1,300 students earned bachelor's and graduate degrees from USC Upstate during the year, positioning them to make a positive difference for their families, their employers, and the Upstate region.

You developed and implemented new academic programs that are in high demand in the marketplace and that will make USC Upstate more attractive and accessible. The leadership team created a bold and exciting new transformative value proposition — "Education for all that inspires a thriving and just society" — that established a high standard for the outcomes we seek to achieve as an institution.

We have a challenging vision for what we hope to accomplish together in service to our students and community, and I'm reminded of the truth that nothing worth doing is easy. We begin the new year with yet another, even more transmissible COVID variant going around. It's important to continue taking all the steps necessary to be safe even as we move forward, undaunted.

We face a process through which we must balance our budget with our current enrollment reality. I have great faith that the expertise and creativity that has made USC Upstate the top-ranked public university in South Carolina will find innovative solutions. The REIMAGINE Enrollment Summit, which produced bold and actionable steps to address recruitment and retention, was a great start. I look forward to similar results as we review academic programs and non-academic divisions, confident that we possess unique and unlimited abilities to position the university for greater service to its students and the Upstate region.

You are central to the success of our diverse, thriving campus community. I'm excited to work with you and to imagine what we can accomplish. Together, let's have a great semester!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bennie L. Harris". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Dr. Bennie L. Harris  
Chancellor