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[www.converse.edu](http://www.converse.edu)

Contact:

[Karen Brower Rhodes](mailto:Karen.Brower.Rhodes@converse.edu)

864.596.9504

### Converse University Announces New 2023-2024 Trustees

SPARTANBURG, S.C. (August 15, 2023) – Converse University is pleased to welcome five new members to its esteemed [Board of Trustees](#):

- Dawn C. Davis Deck '99, Executive Director of Local Initiatives Support Corporation Upstate SC
- Kim Varnadoe Kent '97, Chief Executive Officer of Kentwool
- Brelan Riddle Montgomery '06, Registered Nurse
- Christy Davis Stoner '87, Chief Executive Officer of Uwharrie Investment Advisors, Inc.
- Dwight Van Inwegen, Vice President, Finance/Group CFO of the Pharmaceutical Services Group within Thermo Fisher Scientific



*Deck*



*Kent*



*Montgomery*



*Stoner*



*Van Inwegen*

**Dawn C. Davis Deck** is a graduate of Converse University and holds a Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration and Marketing; she has previously served on the Alumnae Association Board at Converse. Deck is a dedicated community investment leader with deep roots in South Carolina and serves as executive director of the Local Initiatives Support Corporation Upstate South Carolina (LISC) program office. LISC is a national nonprofit that has delivered more than \$27 billion to urban and rural communities in every state, with a particular focus on narrowing racial gaps in health, wealth, and opportunity. In her role, Deck works with residents and partners across the Upstate to create resilient and inclusive communities of opportunity. Prior to her work with LISC, Dawn served as investments and grants manager at the South Carolina Community Loan Fund; prior to that, she spent nearly a decade at The ETV Endowment of South Carolina helping fuel statewide public broadcasting programs.

A native of Spartanburg, Deck diligently serves in her community and volunteers for several local non-profit organizations. She is a student mentor at local schools and colleges; a member of the Advocacy Committee of the United Way of the Piedmont; a 2015 graduate of the Grassroots Leadership Development Institute through the Spartanburg County Foundation; a 2016 graduate of Spartanburg County's Citizens' Academy; a graduate of the

2020 Class of Leadership Spartanburg; and a 2021 graduate of The Diversity Leaders Initiative, a program of Furman University's prestigious Riley Institute. She resides in Upstate South Carolina with her husband of 25 years, Avery, and she is the proud mother of two young-adult sons, Aaron and Alexander.

**Kim Varnadoe Kent** graduated from Converse in 1997 with a degree in Political Science, then attended the University of South Carolina School of Law and was admitted to the South Carolina Bar in 2000. Kent has spent her professional career working in and around South Carolina government, representing a variety of clients, including small businesses, Fortune 500 companies, nonprofit organizations, professional trade associations and specific issue coalitions, on matters before federal, state, and local governments. In 2011, she joined Haynsworth Sinkler Boyd, P.A., to create Copper Dome Strategies, LLC, a wholly-owned subsidiary organized to serve clients' needs in the legislative, regulatory and public policy arenas. In 2017, while maintaining her limited legal and government relations practice, Kent assumed the helm of Kentwool, a family-owned and operated corporation including manufacturing, retail and real estate businesses in Upstate South Carolina. Kent represents the fifth generation of family leadership at Kentwool, which is celebrating 180 years in business this year.

Kent has served her community in a variety of volunteer and board capacities over the years in areas of the arts, education, healthcare and children's organizations. Currently, she is serving on the Board of Artisphere and is an active member of the new Greenville Chapter of the National Charity League. She previously served as a Converse Board member for eight years and as a former Chair of the Board of Trustees of Converse. Kent lives in Greenville, SC, with her wonderful teenage twins, Amelia and Henry, and their dogs, Sugar and Frank.

**Brelan Riddle Montgomery** holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts from Converse University and a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from the University of South Carolina Upstate. She worked as a registered nurse at Spartanburg Day School from 2019-2022; she previously worked as a cardiac nurse in Spartanburg Regional's Cardiovascular Recovery Unit from 2008-2019. Montgomery is an active member of Episcopal Church of the Advent, has served on the Board of the Heart Center for Spartanburg Regional (2016-2022), and as assistant secretary (2022-2023) and secretary (2023-2024) for the Assembly. Montgomery spends her summers working at Falling Creek, a summer camp for boys, in Tuxedo, NC. She and her husband, Will, have three young boys: Herschell, 7, Sam, 9, and William, 11.

**Christy Davis Stoner** holds a Bachelor of Arts from Converse University and serves as Chief Executive Officer of Uwharrie Investment Advisors, Inc. She has been an investment professional since 1987 and is registered with FINRA as a Securities Principal, Financial and Operations Principal, Securities Representative, and Registered Investment Advisor Representative. She also holds North Carolina Life, Accident & Health and Medicare/Long-Term Care licenses. Stoner has been with Uwharrie Investment Advisors since 1991 and was responsible for the establishment and development of the Uwharrie Bank affiliated Broker Dealer and Registered Investment Advisor. Additionally, Stoner is an Accredited Investment Fiduciary (AIF) designee; she guided the firm in becoming and maintaining the CEFEX (Centre for Fiduciary Excellence) certification, indicating that the highest standards of fiduciary excellence in investment management, governance and operational processes are being met.

In addition to serving as Chief Executive Officer of the Company's Wealth Management and Insurance subsidiaries, Stoner also serves as Chief Marketing Officer for Uwharrie Capital Corp and its subsidiaries. She has served on numerous not-for-profit boards and in April of 2021, Stoner received an appointment from

Governor Roy Cooper to serve on the North Carolina State Banking Commission. Additionally, Stoner manages a closely held real estate investment and development company focused primarily on preservation of historic properties. She lives in Albemarle, NC, and has an adult daughter who is a Broadway performer.

**Dwight H. Van Inwegen** is Vice President, Finance/Group CFO of the Pharmaceutical Services Group within Thermo Fisher Scientific and is based in their corporate HQ in Waltham, MA. Prior to joining Thermo Fisher in 2014, Dwight was with International Paper for 20 years in a series of business finance and strategic planning leadership roles in North America and Europe, leading to being based in Brussels, Belgium, as CFO for the company's businesses in EMEA. After leaving IP in 2010, he joined WR Grace as CFO of Construction Products based in Cambridge, MA.

Dwight is married to Converse graduate Shee Shee (Ferry) Van Inwegen '87 and resides in Carlisle, MA. Originally from Cuddebackville, NY, Dwight holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Accounting from the University of Tennessee, is a CPA (inactive) in the State of TN, and enjoyed serving many years on UT's Accounting Advisory Roundtable. He was previously a member of the Board of Trustees at Converse University from 2014 to 2022 and was Chair of the Assets and Resources Committee.

*Immediate Past Board Chair **Sandra Shearouse Morelli** '78 agreed to extend her term and serve for two additional years.*

### **Departing Trustees**

Converse University and its Board of Trustees extend a heartfelt thank you to the following members departing from the Board:

- Randall K. Chambers
- Christopher Dorrance
- Lillian Montgomery Lilly
- Elizabeth Finlay Vingi '87

These members, who will join the vaulted ranks of our Trustees Emeritus, have served Converse with distinction and our campus community will remain forever grateful for the vision and passion that you have selflessly shared for Converse.

### ***About Converse University***

Converse University empowers students to become transformative leaders who see clearly, decide wisely, and act justly. Converse was founded in 1889 by citizens of Spartanburg, SC, who aimed to create an educational experience for women, and in fall 2020 it welcomed its first undergraduate co-educational incoming class. The University encompasses the School of Humanities, Sciences, and Business; the School of the Arts; the School of Education and Graduate Studies; and the Converse College for Women. Converse students experience deep scholarship, transformative mentorship, experiential learning, and wonderful support for and belief in each other. Through this unique formula, Converse is a creator of opportunity for its students through a personalized education that also includes the professional and technical skills graduates need to be successful in their careers.