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Converse University Recognized As A Finalist for The InnoVision Education Award

Spartanburg, SC: On Thursday, November 9, Converse University was named a finalist for the InnoVision Education Award during a ceremony held at the historic 1208 Washington Place in downtown Columbia, South Carolina. This award recognizes innovative approaches to education in South Carolina that create new educational opportunities and experiences for students, new methods of delivery, or improved quality and efficiency.

During the ceremony, Converse University's Department of Mathematics & Computer Science was honored for their innovative work creating educational initiatives focusing on data and data science to help train the next workforce generation.

"We are honored to be recognized as an InnoVision finalist in the Education category," said Dr. Mandy Mangum, Associate Professor of Math and Data Science. "This recognition aligns with Converse's vision of empowering students to become transformative leaders. We have worked hard to create educational initiatives focused on Data and Data Science to meet the modern demands of data-driven employers."

Data Science is an ever-growing field that touches practically every business or industry in some manner. Converse University raised its standards to create initiatives to train the next generation of the workforce with these skills, internships, and connections to practitioners in the field. By blending its liberal arts tradition with the needs and demands of the modern workforce, Converse University has created a flexible Data Science program that encourages students from all disciplines to study data methods and the associated ethics.

"Converse has worked diligently to continually develop a strong curriculum, infused our students' work with data, and forged valuable partnerships in the community," said Dr. Boone Hopkins, President of Converse University. "We are excited to join a distinguished community of innovators that have received recognition from InnoVision for more than 20 years."

In addition to the curriculum, there is a strong focus on real-life data to deepen students' understanding of both content and applications. The department created opportunities for Converse students to hear from and interact with those in various data-centric jobs. Guest speakers and panelists provide invaluable information about career preparation, trajectories, internships, and more. Students are empowered by seeing a range of successful professionals, hearing their stories, and learning how they, too, can start preparing well now.

Hands-on learning opportunities expand into the community. In Spring 2022, students partnered with the Upstate Family Resource Center to provide data-driven solutions to predict how much aid an incoming client may need to reach self-sustainability through the Quantitative Consulting course.

Our efforts are attracting students, equipping students with the skills to fill employment demands in the area, connecting students with potential employers, and growing students' professional networks. Converse prepares qualified graduates to enter a modern workforce where data informs many decisions and to attend graduate programs to further their knowledge.

Photo caption

From left, Presidential Student Ambassador Ryleigh Henderson, Converse University President Boone J. Hopkins, Assistant Professor of Mathematics and Data Science Dr. Amanda Mangum, and Associate Professor and Chair of the Mathematics Department Dr. Jessica Sorrells.

About InnoVision Awards

InnoVision, founded in 1999, is a grass-roots, volunteer-led non-profit organization dedicated to advancing innovation and technology in South Carolina. InnoVision recognizes and honors South Carolina businesses, individuals, and organizations that have demonstrated outstanding advancements in these areas with the annual InnoVision Awards.

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 Liberal Arts and Sciences, the School of Business and Data Science, the School of the Arts, The Graduate School, 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.

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