



# President Hopkins 2024 New Year's Message

Hello Converse friends!

In the spirit of the New Year, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to all of you who have been the driving force behind the positive changes we've witnessed over the past year.

Our campus is not just a physical space; it's a community that thrives on the energy, enthusiasm, and active participation of each and every one of us. And, it's clear that the momentum gained from our fall semester will help to propel us into another transformative year.

Just last month we announced the largest legacy gift in Converse's history - an incredible \$10.3 million gift from the estate of Ernestine Carmichael Raclin, after whom our very own Carmichael Hall is named. With these funds we will be able to restore and expand campus infrastructure to support tomorrow's growth in a way that is accessible, adaptable, and sustainable. In addition, part of this generous estate gift will go toward tiered cost-of-living salary adjustments and a merit based bonus system for our dynamic faculty and staff.

Converse was also recently announced as one of thirty local partners to receive a significant philanthropic investment through Movement 2030 – a county-wide initiative led by the Spartanburg Academic Movement – which aims to improve school readiness, post-secondary attainment, and neighborhood outcomes for generations of Spartanburg County families. As a partner, we have been entrusted with more than \$1 million in philanthropic funds, including a direct award from the Spartanburg Academic Movement and an impactful sub-award from OneSpartanburg. With these funds, Converse will focus on advancing economic mobility and career readiness by increasing adult re-engagement and degree completion, and expanding services and support to veterans -- all helping Spartanburg be a community where everyone thrives.

As we move forward, we must continue to foster this spirit of collaboration and engagement to ensure a thriving future for Converse. From residence hall upgrades and enhanced campus experiences to technological investments and program expansions - Converse needs your

steadfast commitment so we can continue being relentlessly student-centered in our programs, places, and people.

In the coming year, I encourage each of you to come back to 580 East Main and experience a campus community that is like no other.

Whether it's at Reunion Weekend 2024, which I'm excited to announce will be returning to April to coincide with Founder's Day.

Or, at our inaugural May Day Weekend for family and friends– which will be the perfect opportunity to experience life on campus with your student. We'd love to see you again!

Let us embrace the New Year with a renewed commitment to Converse. Together, we will continue to create a campus that is filled with exciting opportunities, meaningful connections, and shines with the collective brilliance of its community.

The future is ours to build together. Go Valkyries!

Boone J. Hopkins, Ph.D.