

your CONNECTION

A Newsletter for Converse Alumni

January 2024



Many alumni, donors and friends were present for the Cudd Ribbon Cutting on Thursday, September 21, 2023. The \$4.8M historic renovation would not have been possible without the support of alumni who valued and loved their time living in Cudd Hall. Many groups raised funds to name rooms and spaces in honor of their class and treasured classmates.

“We are so thankful to our alumni and friends who recognized the value and character of our beloved Cudd Hall and chose to support this important revitalization,” shared Converse University President Boone Hopkins, Ph.D. “Their investment in Converse and its students supports our vision of empowering students to become transformative leaders who see clearly, decide wisely, and act justly. By focusing on the student experience, this renovation creates a living-learning environment that supports student success for generations to come.”

Converse is currently raising funds to finalize this project. If you or your classmates would like to support the Campaign for Cudd, please contact Laura Chappell Bauknight '87 at laura.bauknight@converse.edu or 864-596-9011.



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LETTER From Alumni Director



Dearest Alumni,

What a privilege to return to Converse as Director of Alumni Relations! I look forward to working with our interim Director, Laura Chappell Bauknight '87, and getting to know more of you in the coming months. Please feel free to call the office, swing by Wilson Hall, reach out in an email, or share news via social media. I'm eager to hear from you and learn about your desires for our network.

The Alumni Association Board has been active with many chapter meetings throughout the Southeast these last months. As you enjoy photos from past events, consider joining us in person for gatherings in 2024! If you're in the area this February 8, you can join us at Cleveland House (the former Alumnae House) as our Spartanburg chapter hosts an event, featuring apparel from FOUND, owned by Tracy Williamson Dart '91 and Christi Williamson Pringle '93.

And, it's not too early to peruse programming for our annual reunion! Come join us on Founder's Day Weekend, April 19-20. We'll be highlighting classes ending in 4 and 9, but all are welcome! This year you may choose to register "a la carte," selecting fewer events, or choose to book the traditional full reunion experience as a complete package. For those of you in the Golden Club (welcome, Class of 1974!), there is a separate registration process. The Reunion webpage can be found at converse.edu/reunion or using the QR code found on page 3 of this newsletter.

As we venture into the new year, I hope you will join me in celebrating the accomplishments of our Converse community, and here's to health and happiness for you and yours in 2024!

PS: Here's to eating dessert first in 2024!

Warmly,

Andrea Weatherman Kikkert '05
Director of Alumni Relations



Read it online & share

Want to Give \$25,000 to Converse?

IT'S EASIER THAN YOU MIGHT THINK!

How? By referring a student to Converse who later enrolls! As a graduate, you understand what a Converse education means.

Being an ambassador for Converse is an easy and meaningful way to give back. Refer a student at converse.edu/recruit.



REUNION WEEKEND

April 18-20, 2024



Join the classes ending in 4 and 9 and the Class of 2023 celebrating their traditional “One Year” reunion. We especially welcome the Class of 1974, who will be inducted into the Golden Club to mark their 50th reunion, and the Class of 1999, who will be inducted into the Silver Club to mark their 25th reunion. All Converse alumni are invited to reunite with old friends and make new ones.

SCHEDULE

Thursday, April 18

Golden Club Registration

3:00 pm–5:00 pm

Wilson Hall, Front Porch

Storytelling for Golden Club Members

3:00 pm–5:00 pm

Wilson Hall, Bain, Lee, Stackhouse, and Moore

Golden Club Cocktails with President and Dean Hopkins

5:00 pm–6:00 pm

Piedmont Club, The Palmetto Room

Golden Club Dinner

6:00 pm–8:00 pm

Piedmont Club



Register Today!
converse.edu/reunion

SCHEDULE

Friday, April 19

Golden Club Robing

10:00 am–11:15 am, Bain Room, Wilson Hall
Come enjoy mimosas and breakfast snacks while you get robed and ready for the Founder's Day Procession.

Founder's Day

11:30 am–12:30 pm, Twichell Auditorium
Golden Club processes with faculty and students. You do not have to be registered to attend Founder's Day.

Traditional Lunch on the Lawn with Strawberries and Creme

12:30 pm–1:30 pm, Front Campus

Senior Sip

1:00 pm–2:00 pm, In front of Pell
Welcome our current seniors! IDs are required.

Registration

12:30 pm–4:00 pm, Wilson Hall Porch

Afternoon Activities

Let's Get Back to Class

1:30 pm–2:30 pm, Carmichael Room 310
Enjoy a class with beloved Professor Dr. Joe P. Dunn. The best part: NO homework or tests!

Life After Converse

2:45 pm–4:00 pm, Zimmerli Commons
A panel of outstanding alumni share their life experiences since college. Students are invited.

Sip and Stroll

4:15 pm–5:15 pm, Meet in Montgomery Lobby
Grab a cold beverage and join Macey Atkins for a leisurely guided tour of campus.

Faculty Emeriti Gathering

5:00 pm–6:00 pm, Wilson Hall Lobby
Enjoy a drink with some of your favorite professors.

Hopkins Happy Hour with Faculty and Staff

6:00 pm–7:00 pm, Wilson Hall Lobby
The celebration continues with our President Boone Hopkins, his wife, Dean Chandra Hopkins, and current faculty and staff.

BBQ Followed by DJ Party

7:00 pm–10:00 pm, Front campus
Enjoy dinner and dance the night away with classmates and friends!

Saturday, April 20

State of the College

9:30 am–10:00 am, Twichell Auditorium
Come hear exciting updates from President Boone Hopkins. There will be time for a question-and-answer session.

Class Meetings and All Class Photos (Meetings only for classes ending in 4 and 9)

10:15 am–11:00 am, Carmichael Classrooms and Mickel Library

Tennis Match

11:00, Tennis Courts
Come cheer the Valkyries on as they compete against Frances Marion.

Class Parade

11:00 am, Begins at Carmichael
Gather along the sidewalk for the traditional Parade of Classes to Barnet for brunch.

Awards Brunch

11:15 am–12:45 pm, Barnet
Share in the celebration of the newest members of the Golden Club, Silver Club, and our 2024 Alumni Achievement Award recipients.

Afternoon Activities

Mosaic: Black Alumni Celebration

1:00 pm–2:00 pm, SGA Suite in Montgomery
Black, African, and African-American alumni have been, and continue to be, impactful contributors to the Converse community. This gathering will be a time for Black alums to meet each other and learn more about the important history of Black alumni at Converse.

Alumni Soccer Game

2:00 pm, Turf Field
Come cheer on former Valkyries who still have all the skills.

Lavender Tea: LGBTQIA+ Alumni Celebration

1:45 pm–2:45 pm, Cabin

Converse's LGBTQIA+ alumni are a catalyst for bringing and creating community and belonging to the Converse campus. Join us for an inclusive celebration focusing on conversation and connection.

Sip and Paint

2:00 pm–4:00 pm, Milliken 101

Artist and alum Carlon Steller Grey '10/'16 will lead a fun, do-it-yourself paint class. You will take home your own Converse masterpiece! Limit of 22; register at converse.edu/reunion.

RISE Symposium Drop-In

1:15 pm–3:15 pm, Montgomery

Posters from the 2024 RISE Symposium will be on display from 12–5 pm. This Symposium celebrates students' creative and scholarly achievements as well as the outstanding mentorship of our faculty.

Art Gallery Visit

1:15 pm–3:15 pm, Milliken Art Building

Make your way across back campus and down the hill to wander through the Milliken Art Gallery and view the work of BFA Studio Art Senior Mabel Ni.

Dance Studio Drop-In

1:15 pm–2:15 pm, Montgomery

Meet Allison Roux, Assistant Professor of Musical Theatre Dance, to learn about the new dance major and catch up with Janis Dengler, beloved Associate Professor Emerita of Health and Physical Education.

Alumni Recital

4:00 pm–5:00 pm, Daniel Recital Hall

Join this low-pressure affair full of laughter, love, and great music. To participate in the performance, email mildred.roche@converse.edu by March 29.

Closing Reception

5:00 pm–6:00 pm, Blackman Lobby

Toast a wonderful Reunion and take any last photos.

**At Your Leisure****In Memoriam**

Gibbs Chapel, Montgomery Student Center
The chapel will be open throughout the weekend with a memorial to those classmates we've lost over the past year. Come by at your convenience to pay your respects and observe a moment of silent reflection.

Montgomery Fitness Facilities

Whether it's hitting the elliptical, TRX training, or spreading out your yoga mat, the fitness facilities will be open for you to fit in your workout if you'd like.

Stock Up on Converse Swag

Bookstore, Montgomery Student Center
We'll have vintage items aplenty, and alumni will receive a discount at checkout.

Support Valkyrie Supply

Please consider bringing items for Valkyrie Supply to the Reunion. We will have a collection bin on the porch during registration. Valkyrie Supply, Converse's basic needs hub located on campus, provides students with basic food items, hygiene products and career-ready clothing. We are able to sustain Valkyrie Supply thanks to items donated from community members.

Be sure to visit converse.edu/reunion for the latest schedule and to register!

Purchase tickets separately at converse.edu/reunion.

OPTIONAL SATURDAY EVENTS**Spartanburg Philharmonic Concert**

Doors open at 6:00 pm; show begins at 7:00 pm
 Twichell Auditorium

Theatre Converse Production of Hair

2:30 pm and 7:30 pm
 Hazel B. Abbott Theatre

FALL 2023

Event Highlights

CASHIERS, NC

AUGUST 2023

Hosted by Susie
Cole Wean '71



LAKE SUMMIT, NC

AUGUST 2023

Hosted by Betty James Montgomery '72
and the late Walter Montgomery, Jr.



ROCK HILL, SC

OCTOBER 2023

Hosted at the home of Harriett Marshall Goode '59
with fellow Rock Hill Alumni Judy Bell Oliphant '73,
Grazier Connors Rhea '74 and Susan M. Miskelly '97



GREENVILLE, SC

OCTOBER 2023

Hosted at the home of Kim Varnadoe Kent '97 with Alumni Josie Norwood Cox '86, Jennifer Parks Eley '88, Mary McDaniel Ridgeway '90, Mallory Beckett Daniel '06, and Kitty Oldham Young '66



ATLANTA, GA

NOVEMBER 2023

Hosted by Sandra Shearouse Morelli '78



COMING SOON TO A TOWN NEAR YOU

The Office of Alumni Relations is hitting the road again this spring. Keep checking converse.edu/alumni/gather, as we add events monthly!

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580 East Main Street
Spartanburg, SC 29302
converse.edu/alumni



SAVE THE DATE

Spartanburg Alumni Gathering with FOUND

Join us for a Spartanburg Area Alumni Gathering on Thursday, February 8, from 5:00–7:30 pm at 589 East Main Street (the former Converse Alumnae House). The event includes a Trunk Show with FOUND, a company created and owned by two Converse graduates. Parking will be available along the street and at Converse. An officer will assist with safely crossing Main Street. To learn more, go to shopfoundcollection.com. Register at converse.edu/alumni/gather/.

let's stay connected



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