

Integration, Conversion Keys To University

CLEMSON — The integration of what was then Clemson College and the conversion of Clemson College to Clemson University are the two key factors in the development of the school over the past decade, according to university President Robert C. Edwards.

"A lot of things have happened at Clemson during the past decade," Edwards began, "but let me mention two particular items that I think will serve as a frame of reference to emphasize what I may say in relationship to academic programs and other matters.

"First I am reminded that it was just 10 years ago that we were called upon to face the responsibilities of admitting the first black student to attend any educational institution of any kind in the state of South Carolina. I think that the experiences that we had in conjunction with this process not only proved to be extremely significant to Clemson, but to the entire state. Because of the understanding and support of the people of the state, we were able to get through this crisis without any major problems.

"Interestingly enough," Edwards added, "Mr. Harvey Gant, who was the first black student to be admitted, not only graduated, but graduated with honors. He went on to complete his graduate work at MIT and is currently serving as a member of the faculty in our College of Architecture."

Turning to the transformation of Clemson college into Clemson University, Edwards said, "It was on July 1, 1964, that Clemson College officially became Clemson University. This, I think, is particularly significant because, just as the decision was made 17-plus years ago to convert Clemson College from a four-year military school to a civilian institution; the change from Clemson College to Clemson University has made an equally significant contribution toward making it possible for the development on this campus of the programs, the staff and the resources that are here today and so valuable and so necessary to the future of this state and this nation."

In relating to these key factors, Edwards also discussed

many of the program changes that have taken place at Clemson during the past 10 years.

"I think I would point out as one major achievement in this period the creation of the College of Nursing and a nursing education program," Edwards said. "It began on a very modest basis back in 1965 with the introduction of a two-year associate degree program, clinically based at Anderson Memorial Hospital.

"This program has expanded and continues to expand as we gain more experience. In the meantime, the four-year baccalaureate program in nursing, clinically based in the Greenville General Hospital system, has been initiated, and today we have almost 350 student nurses enrolled. We expect that number to grow to at least 600 within the next two or three years. The nursing program, incidentally, is one of the finest to be found on any campus anywhere in the country."

Continuing into other areas of study, Edwards cited more examples of expansion. "The College of Arts and Sciences as we once knew it has been replaced by subdividing it into two parts," Edwards said. "The disciplines that belong in one area have been combined into what we refer to today as the College of Liberal Arts. The other disciplines that were in the College of Arts and Sciences, plus the life sciences, are now grouped in the College of Physical, Mathematical and Biological Sciences.

"This represents a major change, and also represents a major step forward in that the so-called hard sciences form a perfectly natural disciplinary grouping." The College of Liberal Arts continues to expand, not only in size, but in services. This allows us to present curricula for students at the graduate and undergraduate level who want to major in this area, and other programs that are necessary in serving the rest of the university where the student needs a solid general education background.

"We also created at the beginning of the past decade what is known today as the College of Industrial Man-

agement and Textile Science by putting together in an academic unit the Textile School and the Department of Industrial Management. This program has been further expanded by the transfer of the Department of Economics to this college. So here we have what we refer to as an educational conglomerate designed to serve the business and industrial community and beyond in the production of manpower."

In reviewing changes in other fields, Edwards noted that the college of Engineering had undergone one of the most major renovations in the past 10 years.

"The College of Engineering has probably undergone during the past decade as dramatic a change as has occurred in any academic area in which we are involved," Edwards said. "Our staff had the vision and the wisdom more than a decade ago to anticipate with a remarkably high degree of accuracy the environmental problems that are so critical and with which we are struggling today.

"As a result of this foresight, we started planning programs and facilities and recruiting a staff to deal with these problems as they emerged. Today we have on this campus expertise that is absolutely essential to the solutions of problems relating to our environment whether it be water or air pollution, solid waste disposal or radioactive materials. We are now working in all these areas.

"The bioengineering program is directly health related. We are working with many medical schools, not only the Medical University of South Carolina, but medical and dental schools throughout the country; and we have a program that is nationally and internationally recognized. The environmental systems program is the area through which many of these environmental, ecological and similar problems are dealt with."

Edwards concluded that the past decade has been essential in the development of Clemson University into an institution that seeks to serve the needs of all South Carolinians.

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