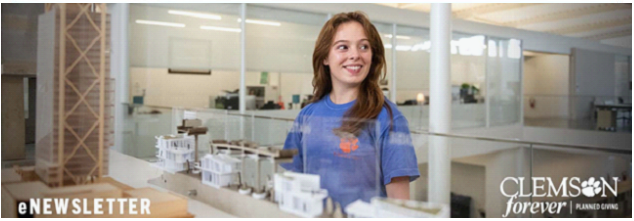

Greetings from Tigertown!

We hope this finds you and your family happy, healthy and enjoying the beginning of Spring. At Clemson, we are beginning to see the first blooms around our beautiful campus, and our students are taking full advantage of the warmer weather – running up and down Walter T. Cox Boulevard, throwing Frisbees and soaking up the sunshine on Bowman Field. Baseball, softball, tennis and golf are in full swing – with our Clemson Tigers displaying their determined spirit to compete at the highest level.

Spring has officially sprung, and it is absolutely my favorite time of the year!

March is also designated as Women’s History Month so we can celebrate the undeniable impact of their contributions. Throughout the month, we also honor and remember the sacrifices made by women *for* women, helping to make the world a better and more inclusive place. What was originally a week-long celebration beginning on March 8 became a month-long celebration in 1987 when Congress officially passed a

resolution designating March as Women's History Month.
I encourage all of us to reflect on the courage and passion of women from current and previous generations so we can celebrate their efforts to create more opportunities and freedoms for women today.

We are surrounded by so many amazing and talented women who lead by example through their steadfast dedication, unending perseverance, honest sincerity and unwavering encouragement. They inspire me to be a better and stronger woman for those around me and for the next generation. Clemson alumna Belva White '87 will forever be one who stands out in my mind as a woman who has widened and paved the path for future generations of women who will follow in her footsteps. I feel blessed to call her my friend and a fellow Clemson Tiger.

It is my privilege to share Belva's story with you:

Belva grew up in Marion, South Carolina. Her parents owned a farm, and her mother worked as a bookkeeper for T. Carroll Atkinson, Jr. at his John Deere dealership. Having served as president of the IPTAY Club, Mr. Atkinson shared his devotion for Clemson with Belva at a young age. With his influence and so many others, Belva cannot remember a time when Clemson was not a part of her life. She attended football games in her youth and watched her brother – and future sister-in-law – thrive as Clemson students. Belva was determined to follow in his footsteps and attend Clemson – so much so that she turned down several offers for tennis scholarships from other colleges.

During Belva's freshman year, her father was diagnosed with cancer. At the same time, double-digit inflation and interest rates took a toll on farm families. Belva was determined to find a way through these challenges. She applied for financial aid and Pell Grants, and to supplement the cost, she worked in the dorms as a front desk attendant, picking up as many shifts as possible.

Eventually, the long hours of working began to affect her grades. This is when a Clemson professor forever changed her life. Belva was enrolled in a tax course with Dr. Jim Turner, and he began to notice her declining grades. When he asked, Belva explained that she had to work extra hours to help make ends meet. Shortly after their conversation, Dr. Turner called Belva *and offered to pay her the same salary to work in his yard that she would earn all day in the dorm. However, she had to agree to work for the Turners on Saturday mornings and use the rest of the weekend to study. Because of this extraordinary act of kindness, Belva reduced her hours at the lower-paying desk job and began focusing more on her end of the deal.*

In addition to everything the Turners did for her, an encounter with a Clemson staff member also made a lasting impact on Belva. The August before her senior year, she was in Marion working at the hardware store. Concerned she had not heard from Clemson's financial aid office, Belva called and after a long wait time, Miriam Wilson answered. Miriam found Belva's file, asked a number of probing questions, and listened. Belva assured her the application was accurate, even if somewhat hard to believe, and further explained that without financial assistance, she would not be able to return to Clemson for her senior year. Scheduled to return to Clemson in three days, Belva's world turned upside-down and a very different future flashed before her. After a pause, Miriam told her to pack her bags, return to Clemson, and to come directly to her office. When Belva arrived at Miriam's office, she discovered that she was getting the financial assistance she needed to finish her degree.

Belva says, "I still remember that overwhelming sense of relief. Without her taking that extra minute to answer my call, to have empathy, and to listen to me and my story, I would have had a very different life. And as I think about that now, and where I am today, I realize that these same defining moments happen for students every day. I hope they have a Miriam, but I also know every Miriam needs a donor behind them to support their efforts to help students in those situations. She, and probably an unknown donor, just really came through for me. It's my turn now." It was a significant event that impacted her life trajectory, leading her to become a certified public accountant after graduating from Clemson in 1987 with a B.S. in accounting and then earn an MBA from Goizueta Business School at Emory University.

Belva's estate planning gift for Clemson was inspired by that moment. She knows there are students like her still out there – struggling to find a way to afford college. They are struggling to follow their life's passions and pursue a degree that will transform their lives. Belva reflects, "My parents told me that *education is the one thing no one can ever take away from you, and they were so right." Belva hopes by sharing her experience, she can reiterate to university staff members that they play a crucial role in the lives of college students. Having now been a staff member at Emory University for 20 years, Belva uniquely understands the significant role staff play, and she wants to find a way to honor Miriam and inspire staff to continue the good work they are doing to support students each day.*

Belva has made a commitment to help future generations of students. Her gift will support students in the School of Accountancy who have demonstrated financial need. She wants to alleviate the stress for students – like her – who are worried about how they are going to pay tuition and bills and who spend time working instead of studying. Belva describes herself as a hard worker who needed a little help. She says, "I worked hard, and Clemson inspired and honored that." For students like her, she wants to support them, knowing they have the potential to be excellent contributors to their local communities and around the world. By helping these students cross the finish line, Belva is confident that they will remember her generosity and the difference it made in their lives – and in turn, be inspired to lift others along the way. She describes them as "top of heart" students, and she is less interested in their class rank in terms of grades. She appreciates their passion and heart to reach their goals and make a positive difference – just like she did.

Throughout our lives, we have experiences that influence and inspire us – people and places that change the trajectory of our lives. Clemson and the Clemson Family did this for Belva. Her Clemson education and experiences laid the foundation for her life, and through current and future gifts, she is ensuring that others will have the opportunity to build their life's foundation. She says, "With planned giving, you have an opportunity to *represent the many things that are important to you."*

The basis of Belva's generosity is empowering others, and yet her generosity goes much farther than just financial support. Entering what was once a male-dominated profession, Belva recalls how the tides had changed when she entered accounting at Clemson. She was actually surrounded by other females. It was a new era, and she credits her mother's generation for paving their path. Her mother was a bookkeeper, and Belva remembers visiting her at work and playing with the computers. Belva says, "I look at her generation as opening the doors. Then we started going through them with a sense of urgency." They were busting through the doors of a male-dominated profession, and they felt a certain pressure to "not blow it," she says. Just as her mother's generation had paved their path, Belva felt a responsibility to pave the path for the next generation of female leaders. She says, "We were strong girls becoming women – entering a profession that was dominated by men." She adds, "Female leaders should always try to hold the door open for future women to walk through."

Belva remains connected to Clemson, returning for football games with her brother, Dwayne, his wife Melanie and their two sons, Jesse and Lee, over the years. Belva, Dwayne and Melanie have passed their love of Clemson down to the next generation, all earning degrees from Clemson. And through her continued support to our great University, Belva will keep sharing her love of Clemson with future generations of Tigers.

Belva credits the Turners, Miriam and her extended Clemson

Family for the amazing success she has enjoyed during her life. Belva's story is one of perseverance, overcoming adversity and having a determined spirit to succeed. She is an inspiration to all of us. Belva has a huge heart and plans to use her gifts of time, talent and treasure to impact future generations of students. Through her professional accomplishments and empowering spirit, she stands as a beacon of hope for women who will follow in her footsteps, breaking through the glass ceiling and leading in the world. Previous generations of women opened the door for Belva's generation, and in turn, she encourages women Tigers of all generations to do their part to empower and ensure the doors remain open for those who follow. You can read Belva's full story here.

AIDS/LIFECYCLE
Ride to end AIDS
7 DAYS | SF TO LA
AIDS/LifeCycle 2013 | June 2-8

Throughout the rest of this month, we hope you will reach out to the women who have helped you along the way, as well as take the time to celebrate the women who have worked extremely hard to widen the path ahead – like Belva – who continue to motivate and inspire us on our journey.

Please reach out to us so we can help you explore the many ways in which you can impact Clemson through creative gift and estate planning today, tomorrow and forever. There are a variety of ways to stay connected with us. Please visit our website to view excellent online resources, and you can view detailed information about IRA Charitable Qualified Distribution (QCD) benefits here. For information about general estate planning, please download our free Wills Guide, which is designed to help you navigate your thoughts and plans before you visit with your attorney and financial advisors. We are also available to visit with you in-person or by telephone. As always, please know that we are eternally grateful for everything you have done for Clemson University.

Hope springs eternal as we pray for everyone in Ukraine and those around the world who continue to fight for freedom. May this spring season bring you and your family all the flourishment, encouragement and brightness you need to thrive. Please make plans to join us on campus soon; the flowers are blooming, trees are gorgeous and our students have awakened after a long, cold winter. And as always, please feel free to contact me at giving@clemson.edu if we can assist you and your family in any way. It is always my pleasure to hear from you!
GO Tigers!

Gratefully yours,

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Finances

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Treasury Yields Rise

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Savvy Living

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Can you direct me to affordable wireless smartphone plans for those of us who do not use much data? I use my smartphone primarily for texting and talking but need some data for checking my email and a few other things when I am away from Wi-Fi. Currently, I...

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Donor Stories

Learn how others have made an impact at Clemson through their acts of giving.

Leading the Way Forward

Retired from 40 years of dedicated and faithful service to the University, Jack McKenzie continues to build upon the foundation of service he began many years ago.

Thank you for your interest in planned giving. To access any of our resources, please go to our website.

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