

# A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Rhodes College



## Dear Colleagues,

As the holiday break approaches, I wish all of you a very joyful Thanksgiving, and I hope you will be able to spend it with family and friends. It's a wonderful time of year to reflect on all the things that make us grateful.

I am so thankful for the opportunity to be part of this wonderful college. Over the last few months, I've been able to visit with many alumni, both here in Memphis and in Atlanta, Nashville, Dallas, New York, and Washington, D.C. They consistently mention how grateful they are for the education they received at Rhodes and for the network of classmates they continue to stay in touch with across the country. I have heard alumni repeatedly praise our extraordinary faculty and staff, and tell me how a class with Terry Hill, Loretta Jackson-Hayes, Charles McKinney, or Rebecca Finlayson, or advice and support from Sandi George Tracy, Rodney Rogan, or Jeff Cleanthes, to give just a few examples, changed the direction of their academic and professional careers. I am grateful for every one of our faculty and staff, and I know how hard you are working to support our students and each other. I've also talked with many parents who are so thankful for the mentors their children have here and the strong academic and extracurricular foundation they are receiving at Rhodes. These stories amplify all the reasons I chose to make Rhodes my home, too.

I'd like to share a few important updates as we head into next week's holiday break.

## VP Search

Finalists for the Vice President for Student Life position will be on our campus the last week of November. We had an extremely strong pool, so we anticipate bringing five candidates to Rhodes for further meetings and discussions. We hope to be able to extend an offer by mid-December. We'll be sharing more information about these visits in the coming weeks.

## Fall Applications

I'm happy to announce our Early Decision applications for the Class of 2027 are up 19% over last year. Even though we are celebrating this achievement, we still have a long way to go until August, and I'd like to ask for your assistance. If you have a friend, a relative, or a neighbor who is visiting colleges this year, please encourage them to put Rhodes on their list. We know that once students step foot on our incredibly inspiring campus, they are highly likely to apply, and we certainly want them here!

## Athletics

Rhodes Athletics received numerous postseason awards, including SAA Coach of the Year for men's soccer, head coach Matt Lamb; SAA Defensive Player of the Year for Men's Soccer, goalkeeper Mitchell Fenton; SAA Co-Staff of the Year for field hockey, head coach Katie Gerzabek Salem and assistant coach Averill Erdody; and SAA Offensive Player of the Year for field hockey, Sophie Croci. In addition, Rhodes had 26 athletes (men's soccer, women's soccer, volleyball, field hockey and cross country) named to SAA All-Conference teams. Congratulations to all these student-athletes and their teams on a successful fall season!

I also want to congratulate Men's Soccer for going unbeaten in the conference and winning the SAA Regular Season crown for the first time in program history. Field Hockey also won the SAA Regular Season title after going a perfect 5-0 in conference play, and cross country runner Jared Briant will be proudly representing Rhodes at the NCAA National Championships.

A BIG thank you goes to all the donors who made our Athletic Day of Giving so successful. We reached 196% of our goal with 1,041 donors giving more than \$283,000 to support our athletic programs!

Mike Clary has announced his plans to retire in May after 44 years of service to Rhodes in numerous capacities with Athletics. For the last 17 years, Mike has coached the women's golf team, which has won three Division III national championships in the last eight years. Mike also served as athletic director for 26 years. He has been a mentor, friend, and colleague to so many through the years. We wish Mike and his wife Nancy all the best as they enter this next phase in their life together. Rhodes is grateful for you both and the many lives you have influenced over the last 44 years.

## Alumni Awards

We recently recognized several of our outstanding alumni during Homecoming Weekend. Dr. Russell T. Wigginton Jr. '88, president of the National Civil Rights Museum, received the Distinguished Alumni Award. Brad Hensley '12, an aerospace engineer and inventor who was involved in the NASA-simulated mission to Mars last summer, received the Young Alumni Award, and Kathy Moore Cowan '78, the first executive director of Local Initiative Support Corporation Memphis, received the Black Student Association Distinguished Alumni Award. We are so proud of them and the way their many accomplishments shine a light on Rhodes.

Thank you so much for being part of the Rhodes family, and happy Thanksgiving.

Sincerely,  
Jennifer Collins

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Rhodes College | 2000 North Parkway | Memphis, TN 38112  
800.844.5969 | 901.843.3000

View this email [online](#).

2000 N. Parkway  
Memphis, TN | 38112 United States

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