

This is a copy of our Alumni newsletter that is sent monthly to our alumni.

If you wish to receive these emails, please let us know at alumni@jsu.edu.



October 2026 Edition

FEATURED EVENTS

UPCOMING EVENTS



We had a wonderful time this September with our alumni and friends! Thank you to everyone who attended the Alumni House Open House, Black Alumni Weekend, and our first two State of the University Presidential Addresses!

We also honored this year's 22 Under 40 recipients with an afternoon award ceremony at Houston Cole Library and pregame recognition at the Jax State football game on Sept. 26. To view our events over the past month, [click here](#).

Consider traveling with us to Germany in May 2027! Visit Vienna, Prague, Leipzig, Wernigerode, and support Jax State's A Cappella Choir at the **14th International Johannes Brahms Choir Festival**.

Contact [Dr. Philip Copeland](#) with Travel Collegiate, LLC, for questions or if you need registration assistance. Learn more about the trip and register [here](#).

Don't forget, **Homecoming** is November 7! Make plans to return to campus, visit departmental open houses, and join the Homecoming festivities. The parade is set for 11:00 AM and kickoff against Sam Houston State takes place at 6:00 PM.



It's not too late to register for today's **Gamecock Gathering** in Kennesaw, GA! Join us for a pregame gathering at Tin Lizzy's Cantina, just a few minutes from Fifth Third Stadium, before the Gamecocks take on Kennesaw State at 7:00 PM ET. [RSVP here](#).

Make plans to attend the **State of the University Presidential Address** at the Montgomery Country Club on October 27! State of the University-Nashville has been postponed until March 5.

Registration will close October 15 for the **International House 80th Reunion**. We look forward to welcoming alumni and friends back to campus for a special weekend of connection, reflection, and celebration.

Don't miss a chance to test your running skills in the Southeastern Leadership Command College Affinity Network's **Ruck Run** on October 24. We encourage alumni, friends, family, and community to participate in this challenging but fun event. [Register here and learn more](#).

[Learn more and register for upcoming events here](#).

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

AROUND CAMPUS



Donny Finley ('75) stayed true to his passion and humble Alabama roots. He is a nationally renowned painter and continues to share his incredible talent and unique ability to offer different perspectives on the world. Finley recently painted a portrait honoring fellow Pi Kappa Phi brother Randy Owen for the new Randy Owen Center for the Performing Arts. The special artwork is proudly displayed in the lobby.

[Read more about Donny Finley here.](#)



"The hidden jewel at Jacksonville State" by Allen Mendenhall - The Center for Leadership and American Principles offers a Master of Science in Education in partnership with the Jack Miller Center allowing K-12 teachers to earn degrees over the summer months at reduced tuition.

[Read more here.](#)

Jax State has set a **new all-time enrollment record** for the sixth consecutive year, continuing an unprecedented stretch of record-setting growth. [Read more here.](#)

Jax State and Calhoun Community College create new pathways for social work students. Two agreements provide streamlined transfer routes into Jax State's **Bachelor of Social Work** program. [Read more here.](#)

COCKY BUSINESS



Justin Brown ('92 & '93) is spreading happiness and joy year-round through his business, **Santa Birmingham**. As a

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION



We have enjoyed hosting a few **Alumni Association** member-only events at the Alumni House this semester. Annual

professional Santa portrayal artist, Brown shares the magic of Christmas across Birmingham, Alabama, and surrounding areas.

[Read more about Santa Birmingham here.](#)

[Submit your own Cocky Business to be featured](#) in one of our upcoming newsletters here!

membership is only \$35 (individual) and \$50 (joint) and comes with a welcome package and special activities and benefits throughout the year.

To learn more about our membership packages, visit our **[membership page](#)**.

GROWING GAMECOCKS



A message for our Growing Gamecocks!

Halloween is just a few weeks away! Dress up like a Jax State football player, cheerleader, or Cocky, and we will send you a special gift! Please share your photos with us at alumni@jsu.edu.

[Click here to learn more about the program and sign up today!](#)

ALUMNI CONNECTION



It's almost Homecoming – November 7! If you are searching for classmates that you have lost touch with over the years, visit our **Alumni Connection** page, sign up, and start reconnecting.

The free platform is a great way to reunite with friends, especially if you are planning on being at campus during this special time. **[Click here to get started.](#)**

COMING TO THE ROC

GAMECOCKS GIVE BACK



The Randy Owen Center for the Performing Arts is hosting field trips for schools in surrounding areas to attend, allowing students to learn more about performing arts including theater and music.

The **Curtain Up Project** is an effort to provide affordable access to these events.

If you are interested in learning more about the opportunity to sponsor the cost of tickets and transportation for these students, please reach out to Katie Burns at krburns@jsu.edu.

Marching Southerners On the Go Fund



Marching Southerners Rose Parade Update

The Marching Southerners are one step closer to representing Jax State on a national stage at the 2027 Rose Parade in Pasadena, California. Thanks to the generosity of alumni, parents, and friends, **\$1,374,655.17** has been raised toward the campaign's **\$2.2 million goal**.

Momentum continues to build with a generous **\$750,000 matching gift challenge** from an anonymous donor, providing an opportunity to double your impact and accelerate progress toward the goal. New uniforms have arrived and are already being proudly worn this season, offering a glimpse of the band's exciting future as preparations continue for this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

Every gift helps ensure that these talented students can showcase Jax State's spirit, pride, and excellence on one of the world's most celebrated stages. Supporters who would like to help send the Marching Southerners to Pasadena can learn more and make a gift at jsu.edu/roseparade.

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