

**South Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities
Board of Trustees Class of 2021
September 1, 2018 to August 31, 2021**



Cynthia M. Bennett

**Vice President of Education and Workforce Development
South Carolina Chamber of Commerce
Columbia**

Cynthia graduated from the University of South Carolina with a BA in Political Science. With over 19 years of experience working with schools and businesses, she is responsible for the Chamber's education programs and serves as a part of the legislative team focusing on the Education and Workforce legislation. Cynthia has served on the Education Oversight

Committee, United Way of the Midlands Board of Directors, SC Afterschool Alliance Board (Chair), and is a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority.



David Charpia

**Market President for Upstate SC
Ameris Bank
Greenville**

David has been in commercial banking for more than three decades and joined Ameris Bank in 2008. He is a Furman University graduate and member of the FU Athletic Hall of Fame. David is a member of the North Greenville University

Board of Trustees and chairs the Finance and Investment Committee. Additionally, he serves on the Board of Trustees of the Southern Mutual Church Insurance Company and is involved in numerous other community activities.

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John J. Garrison

**Vice President, Chief Compliance Officer
Unum Group
Columbia**

John has worked for Colonial Life/Unum Group for 26 years. Early in his career he served as an attorney with the State Senate Office of Research and the Banking and Insurance Committee. John is a graduate of Francis Marion University and the University of South Carolina School of Law. He serves on the boards of Healthy Learners and both the South Carolina and North Carolina Life and Health Guaranty Associations.



Joe Gillis

**President/CEO/Founder
Gillis Advertising, Gillis Specialty Advertising, and ADSCORE
Digital Media
Blythewood**

A graduate of Newberry College, Joe Gillis opened his first advertising agency in 1980. Ten years later he established a second advertising company focusing on specialty marketing products. To serve the needs and ever-changing trends in media advertising, Joe recently launched his third company, ADSCORE Digital Media. ADSCORE will specialize in ad campaigns on Facebook and all electronic devices using over 15 direct platforms to target specific audience and demographics.

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Stephen E. Hall

**Vice President for Development
FGP International (Find Great People)
Greenville**

Steve is a 28-year veteran of the executive search, professional staffing, human resources consulting, and outplacement industry. He earned a BS degree from Bob Jones University.

Active in community and state professional and leadership organization, Steve's service includes serving on the boards of PalmettoPride, Greenville Technical College Foundation, and Greenville County Human Relations Commission.



Brandolyn Thomas Pinkston

**Former Administrator
South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs
Columbia**

Brandy joined the Department of Consumer Affairs in 1980 and served as administrator from 2002 until her retirement in 2011. Prior to joining Consumer Affairs, Brandy was the Director of Career Development Services at Morris College. She earned a

BA degree from Shaw University and a MA degree from North Carolina Central University. Brandy has served on numerous boards during her career. Currently, she is on the boards for the USC School of Journalism and Mass Communications and the Columbia Museum of Art.

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Robert B. Porter

**Market President
BB&T
Spartanburg**

A graduate of Wofford College and Upstate native, Ben has spent his entire professional career in banking, almost exclusively with BB&T. He is a graduate of BB&T's Leadership Development Program, the South Carolina Bankers' School, and Leadership South Carolina. Ben serves on the South Carolina

Jefferson Awards Foundation Board of Directors and the Young Leaders Society of the United Way of the Piedmont.



Leigh Ann Puryear

**Public Relations Associate
Duke Energy Carolinas – South Carolina
Greenville**

Leigh Ann is responsible for issues management, public relations, community enhancement programs, and outreach for Duke Energy's Upstate South Carolina Region. She also serves as a liaison for the Duke Energy Foundation. A graduate of USC with a BA in English, Leigh Ann is active in the community

serving on the American Red Cross Upstate South Carolina board and program committee for Greenville Chamber's PULSE Young Professionals.

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David A. Simon III

**President and Chief Executive Officer
South Carolina Student Loan Corporation
Columbia**

Trey succeeded SCICU Trustee Chuck Sanders as president and CEO of the Student Loan Corporation in November 2017. He has 20 years of experience with Student Loan and has a strong background in information technology, leadership, and communications. Trey graduated from USC's Darla Moore

School of Business and has been the owner and principal of Logivation LLC, an IT consulting business, since 2002.