



FALL 2022

John de la Howe School Alumni Association

Newsletter



56th Annual Alumni Homecoming/Reunion & the 225th Anniversary of John de la Howe on November 5!

The Homecoming/Reunion was canceled for the year 2020 due to COVID. It was a hard decision to cancel the reunion but it was done for the safety of all alumni, staff, and students. The reunion will be held on Saturday, November 5, 2022. We want everyone to feel safe so we encourage everyone to wear their mask if you feel safer. It is not mandatory.

Alumni registration begins at 9 AM in the L.S. Brice School Building. Come visit with your friends, view the many photo albums in the library and reminisce about your days at de la Howe.



2018 Alumni Homecoming/Reunion picture

The 225th Anniversary Celebration is a time to celebrate the long history of the school and its accomplishments throughout the years. The theme for the celebration is “Coming Home to John de la Howe”.

The first activity of the 225th Celebration begins at 8 AM with the “Bull Run 5 K”. Other activities begin at 9 AM on the Governor’s Green (circle in front of the Administration Building). Activities include a “Coming Home Movie” playing at the Dairy Barn, and on the Governors Green there will be a Petting Zoo, Historically Based Ag Olympics, Blacksmith/Mule Demo, Pottery Station, Artifacts on Display at Shiflet Hall (old school building), Military Appreciation Setup and Display, Campus Tours, and Lethe Site available for tours.

Come join the fun and fellowship! We look forward to seeing you all. (See the Schedule of Events for more details about activities and times. Schedule of events will also be included in the Alumni Roster.)

Each alumni will receive an Alumni Roster at registration. This roster assists alumni in keeping in touch with alumni sisters and brothers. If you haven’t been to a reunion in many years, please contact Tammy Hill at 843-509-7801 or tammyhill27278@gmail.com to make sure we have your current address. Also please contact us if you have a change of address.

We would also appreciate you contacting Tammy Hill if you know of an alumni who has passed away since the last reunion. We would like to memorialize them during the business meeting.

LETTER FROM ALUMNI PRESIDENT



Dear Alumni and Friends,

It has been a long time since we had the chance to get together. This year we will be 225 years old and we will be having our reunion. How great is that! We will be having lots of things going on that day for everyone. An exciting time for sure.

Things have changed since our last reunion and I am sure you will like what you see.

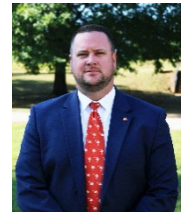
We, as alumni, need to pull together in supporting the school. By pulling together we can help set the stage for greatness at John de la Howe School of Agriculture.

We should always be a first-rate version of ourselves and not a second-rate version of someone else.

No one has ever achieved greatness without dreams and help from others. Looking forward to seeing everyone on November 5th.

Ronnie Davis
President, Alumni Association

LETTER FROM THE GOVERNOR'S SCHOOL PRESIDENT



Dear Alumni,

On Saturday, November 5, the South Carolina Governor's School for Agriculture at John de la Howe will commemorate the 225-year history of this beautiful and peaceful spot of land that has come to mean so much to all of us.

"The 1797 Celebration" will commemorate the year that Dr. De la Howe in his last will and testament set aside this place as an "agricultural seminary" for young people. In the two-and-a-quarter centuries since the good doctor's passing, his former Lethe Plantation has touched the lives of thousands; as alumni of the John de la Howe School, you know the emotional appeal of this campus better than most.

The theme for the "The 1797 Celebration" is "Coming Home to John de la Howe." It was conceived as both a look back upon the rich history of this sacred place and a look ahead at the promise of the future through the ongoing mission and vision of the Governor's School for Agriculture.

On that Saturday, the farm will spring to life with interactive living history vignettes from colonial-era re-enactors, displays of historical memorabilia and documents, live music, delicious food, and of course, walking tours of the Lethe home site and Dr. de la Howe's tomb. The entire state and local community will be invited to share in this celebration, of course, but that day will be made even more special as the alumni association gathers here for your reunion.

With so many in our current family of students and staff also participating in “The 1797 Celebration,” the past, present and future of this institution will come together on November 5 in what promises to be an unforgettable weekend. It is my privilege to welcome our alumni back to the John de la Howe campus for your reunion and for this celebration of history.

I am so pleased that on that Saturday you will be, as the festival theme so beautifully states, “Coming Home to John de la Howe.” I look forward to visiting with you.

Respectfully,

Timothy R. Keown, Ed.S.
President, SC Governor’s School of Agriculture
At John de la Howe

John de la Howe School Alumni Association

Proposed Changes to the By-Laws

The John de la Howe School Alumni Association is requesting to Amend the John de la Howe School By-Laws. The By-Laws need to be updated to reflect the association’s current goals and activities. In the By-Laws, ARTICLE II Dues, Section 1, ALL MEMBERS. The biennial (2 years) dues for members of the Association shall be thirty dollars (\$30.00). Dues are payable in advance or at the time of reunion.

This change was requested by the John de la Howe School Alumni Association Board of Directors.

A copy of the proposed change will be available prior to the Alumni Business Meeting to be held on Saturday, November 5, 2022.

S.C. Governor’s School for Agriculture at John de la Howe names Hall of Fame Inductees During Awards Day



L-R: John Mark Shiflet, Debbie Shiflet, Kelley Shiflet Cox, John Shiflet, Carolyn Brice, and Mr. and Mrs. James Brice

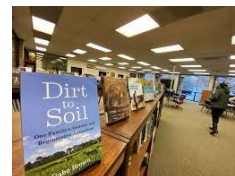
John C. Shiflet, Jr., who served as Superintendent of the John de la Howe School from 1979 to 1999, was inducted into the South Carolina Governor’s School for Agriculture at John de la Howe Hall of Fame during the Awards Day 2022 ceremonies held at the historic McKissick Chapel. Several family members attended the awards ceremony with Mr. Shiflet who previously was honored for his service to the school with the naming of Shiflet Hall

Carolyn Brice and Mr. and Mrs. James were on hand for Awards Day 2022, held at the historic McKissick Chapel, as the late **Laurie S. Brice, Sr.** was inducted posthumously into the South Carolina Governor’s School for

Agriculture at John de la Howe Hall of Fame. Mr. Brice had served as Superintendent of the John de la Howe School from 1967 to 1979. The current school classroom building is named in memory of Mr. Brice.

**John de la Howe School Alumni Homecoming/Reunion & the
225th Governor's School of Agriculture at John de la Howe**
Schedule of Events, Saturday, November 5

- 7:30 AM Gates at the Front Entrance will be open throughout the day
- 8:00 AM Bull Run 5K for all age groups (Arrive early to register)
- 9:00 AM – 12 Noon Registration at the L.S. Brice School Building for Alumni
- 9:00 AM 225th Anniversary Activities includes a “Coming Home” movie at the Dairy Barn, Artifacts on Display at Shiflet Hall, and Petting Zoo, Historically Based Ag Olympics, Blacksmith/Mule Demo, Pottery Station, Military Appreciation on the Governor's Green, Campus and Lethe Site tours available.
- 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM Photo Albums in the L.S. Brice School Library
- 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM Campus Tours – Residential Halls (Cottages). You may visit other sites around campus.
- 10:30 AM Parade around the Governor's Green with Gene Swygert as Grand Marshall
- 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM Lunch at the Dave L. Hayes Cafeteria. Tickets for lunch are \$5 per ticket. Tickets may be purchased at the entrance to the cafeteria. Lunch will include hot dogs, chili, chips, cookies, etc.
- 2:00 PM End to 225th Anniversary Celebration
- 2:15 PM – 3:15 PM Alumni Association Business Meeting to be held in the Chapel. Please join your fellow Alumni for an assembly and be an active part of your Association. Drawing for door prizes at the end of the meeting.
- 3:15 PM Alumni Group Picture will be taken on the steps of the Chapel.
- 3:30 PM – 5:00 PM Bingo in Cafeteria and Corn Hole and Horse Shoes on grounds at Cafeteria
- NO EVENING MEAL PLANNED
- 7:00 PM – 12 AM After-Hours Social Event at the Dairy Barn with a DJ playing music from the 1960's to 1980's



Accommodations Available for the Reunion

Rooms are on hold at **Hickory Knob State Resort Park** under “John de la Howe School Reunion”. Call Reservations at 800-491-1764. Call before October 4 and get 15% off. After October 15 it will be first come first serve and no discount. Other options are hotel rooms at John de la Howe School in the old school building, now referred to as Shiflet Hall. Call Scottlyn Cloniger at 864-391-2131 to check availability. Other options are: Belmont Inn in Abbeville, SC at 104 E Pickens St, Abbeville. Call Reservations at 864-459-9625 ~ Culler's Inn, Lincolnton, GA. Call 706-359-6161. ~ Fairfield Inn, 527 ByPass 72 NW, Greenwood, SC 864-330-3300. ~ Holiday Inn Express, 300 W. Creek Blvd, Greenwood 864-889-8900. ~ Comfort Inn 110 Birchtree Dr, Greenwood, SC 864-223-1818. ~ Days Inn, 233 Birchtree Drive, Greenwood SC 864-223-1818 ~ Sharon Manor B & B, Abbeville, SC 864-378-9310. Local Campgrounds are available at Hickory Knob State Resort Park, Elijah Clark State Park, and many more in the area. Check online or call to make sure campsites are open in November.

Slate of Nominees for the 2022-2024 Alumni Board of Directors

The Slate of Nominees for the 2022-2024 Alumni Board of Directors is listed below. Nominations will be accepted from the floor at the Alumni Association Business Meeting on Saturday, November 5. If you are interested in being a member of the Board of Directors, please call Gene Swygert at 803-331-9959 or email at grs1030wr@gmail.com. We encourage members to get involved and give back to the school.

Slate of Nominees for the 2022-2024
John de la Howe School Alumni Association
Board of Directors 2022-2024

President: Gene Swygert
V. President: Ernie Willis

Secretary: Tammy Edmunds Hill
Treasurer: Sandi Knight Boazman
Sharon Davis Hughes
JoAnn Alewine Durst
Billie Compton Gerstenberger
Christine Jenkins
Tray Hadden
Jake Simpson
Raymond Allen
Ronnie Davis, Past President
One Slot available!

Thank you to all of the Alumni Board of
Directors who served from 2018-2022!

President: Ronnie Davis
V. President: Gene Swygert
Secretary: Tammy Edmunds Hill
Treasurer: Sandi Knight Boazman
Sharon Davis Hughes
JoAnn Alewine Durst
Billie Compton Gerstenberger
Wendy Seigler Gable
George Albert McClain, Past President
Robin Revis Prince
Richard Wolfe
Tony Warren, Parliamentarian
Volunteer, Ernie Willis

*John de la Howe School Alumni Association 2nd Annual
Pre-Valentine Dance, Saturday, February 4, 2023*



The John de la Howe School Alumni Association will hold the 2nd Annual Fundraising Dance on Saturday, February 4, 2023, at the Savannah Lakes Village Recreation Complex in McCormick, S.C. Events will include a dinner, silent auction, door prizes, and raffles, along with the entertainment provided by the Carolina Coast Band and featuring Rhonda McDaniel.

More information about the events of the Dance will be available at the reunion. Proceeds will be used to decorate the three remaining residences (Charleston, Hessie Morrah, and Hester) for the students at the Governor's School of Agriculture at John de la Howe. We hope you will plan to attend. Tickets will be \$50 per couple. Your alumni association also provides other needed items for the school that are not available through other means. Alumni Reunion is also supported by alumni dues and the fundraisers.

A NEW CHAPTER IN HISTORY



The first-ever valedictorian of the Governor's School for Agriculture, Aestas Hodge, delivers her address to the Class of 2022

History was made on Friday afternoon, May 27, as the South Carolina Governor's School for Agriculture honored its very first graduating class in commencement exercises on the Governor's Green.

With stately John de la Howe Hall as the backdrop, the 21 members of the Class of 2022 walked across the stage and received their diplomas from school president Tim Keown and principal Greg Thompson. The ceremony was the culmination of a two-year journey for the school to its first "product" – as Mr.

Thompson likes to call the graduates – since the state's third Governor's School was created by the General Assembly and signed into existence by Gov. Henry McMaster.

"Many adjectives come to my mind when describing our 21 seniors; however, one descriptor in particular stands out to me: courageous," Mr. Keown said. "Courageous decisions were made by parents and guardians – and our students – to make the decision to move from their comfortable homes and new school buildings to attend here. Our graduates are courageous for entering the agriculture, forestry, and natural resources industries. The work is not always easy, and the pay is not as competitive as other career options. Our students do have the passion and are driven by their common love for our planet."

Aestas Hodge was honored as valedictorian for the Class of 2022, while Lee Fulmer was named salutatorian. In her valedictory address, Aestas said reminded her fellow graduates that, "Today is monumental for you, this school and the future."

"We're the first graduating class of the first Governor's School for Agriculture in America," she said. "You've all done so much for this school, and your influence will last for years to come."

In his salutatory address, Lee looked back at history and thanked the school's namesake Dr. John de la Howe for establishing the first school on this 1,300-acre campus in his last will and testament in 1797. He also praised the faculty and staff who pulled together to launch the school and mentor the Class of 2022 to their graduation day.

"You have taken an idea and turned it into a reality, a vision and made it real," Lee said. "You have taken kids and turned them into leaders. Thank you for the tireless efforts you have put into this school, myself and my classmates."



Jaquez Perry, one of our two S.C. State Innovation Scholarship winners, receives his diploma from Principal Greg Thompson.

The keynote address for the commencement ceremonies was delivered by Dr. Sharon Wall, who served as the interim president for the Governor's School for Agriculture prior to Mr. Keown's appointment. Dr. Wall was a tireless advocate for the school's creation as the legislation made its way through the General Assembly in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In acknowledging the support of family, friends and others who supported the first graduating class on their journey to history, Dr. Wall urged the graduates to "find your North Star – something you want to

commit to – and go for it and make them proud. I have learned that you are the author of your book of life. So, make one you can be proud of. Make it a best-seller.”

Prior to conferring diplomas on the 21 graduates, Mr. Thompson discussed the significance in the size of this first graduating class. “Ironically, the number 21 symbolizes protection, comfort and patience during a transition period. It also symbolizes the beginning of a new phase in life. So let’s get ready for the new chapter, and congratulations to the Class of 2022.”

(“Originally Published In The Aggie Report Newsletter – Summer 2022”)

FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL AT JDLH SEES GROWTH, NEW EXCITEMENT AMONG AGGIES



Ag teacher Rodney Mann teaches his students in a field behind the Governor’s School for Agriculture greenhouse on the first day of school.

The third full academic year of the South Carolina Governor’s School for Agriculture at John de la Howe has begun, and the Aggie family is continuing to grow in both numbers and excitement. More than 70 students and their families gathered on the 1,310-acre campus in McCormick County over the weekend of August 6-7 as residential students settled into their cottages. A few more “daytime-only” students joined the resident Aggies on Monday, August 8 for the first official day of classes.

“We’re happy that all our returning students wanted to come back to school and seem to be excited,” Greg Thompson, our school principal, said at the end of the first day of school. “We’ve got a lot of new things coming up for these young people, and I’m just a proud principal.”

As the new school year began, Mr. Thompson announced a new theme for the 2022-2023 academic year: “Huddle Up!” It is a theme that stresses the value of teamwork. “‘Huddle Up!’ actually means that we’re all in the huddle together, and we have one goal,” he said. “In order for us to reach our goal, we all have to be in the huddle and work together.”

This year for the first time, returning Aggies will serve as part of a mentor program for incoming students to help them acclimate to the unique way of life at the Governor’s School for Agriculture, the only residential high school in the United States dedicated to agriculture education. “I think they will provide a lot of good guidance to our new students,” Mr. Thompson said of the veteran Aggie mentors.

Agency president Timothy Keown echoed Mr. Thompson’s excitement about the growth of the student population, which has more than doubled from the first year of the Governor’s School for Agriculture initiative in 2020. This year, in addition to homegrown Aggies from across South Carolina, the enrollment includes several from Georgia, North Carolina and Florida. For the first time, this year’s crop of Aggies includes students from South Carolina’s Pee Dee region.



Ag mechanics teacher Russ Abrams talks with his students on the opening day of the 2022-23 school year.

“The good news is traveling fast about this amazing school, and we are thankful,” Mr. Keown said. Next spring, the school’s second graduating class – the Class of 2023 – will include 27 seniors, which is six more students than the inaugural herd of graduating Aggies.



Physical education teacher Troy Cann leads a group of students at the Governor’s School for Agriculture

“I think the kids that just graduated this past spring have set the bar for them,” Mr. Thompson said. “I stressed to our returning students about even improving on the product we produced last year. We’re excited about chasing some more scholarship money for these new folks for our upcoming seniors and these new folks coming in.”

The Class of 2022 – the first graduating class under the new mission – was awarded more than a half-million dollars in college scholarships. The school leadership is hoping to improve even on that staggering level of early academic success.

“We have challenged the class of 2023 to earn \$550,000, a goal that I believe to be attainable,” Mr. Keown said. Even before the first day of classes began, the Governor’s School for Agriculture was recognizing student success. A small corps of Aggies who represented the school at the South Carolina Jr. Beef Round-Up at Clemson University last weekend were recognized at the year’s first morning roll call.

“We are looking forward to an amazing year with more student accolades than ever before,” Mr. Keown said. (*“Press Release on August 10, 2022 by Governor’s School of Agriculture at John de la Howe.”*)

John de la Howe School Alumni Association

John de la Howe School Alumni Association
C/O Tammy E. Hill, Secretary
2727 Greenwood Highway
Bradley, SC 29819