

BIO

James E. Clark

President of South Carolina State University

South Carolina State University’s 12th President, Mr. James E. Clark is a native of Quincy, Florida.  Referring to his parents as “the smartest people I know,” they instilled in him the value of a good education, hard work, and discipline.  His father Edmon had a second-grade education and his mother Annie, a sixth-grade education, but they wanted more for Clark and his siblings.  His father became his first role model as a well-respected businessman within the farming community, and Clark followed in his footsteps, with expanded opportunities he could have only imagined.

An accomplished visionary with a stellar career, Clark brings to the presidency a data-driven, results-oriented, business approach that launches and drives positive outcomes.  His proven experiences in leading Fortune 5-500 companies has prepared him to provide the leadership necessary to move SC State University to the next level.  Clark firmly believes that solid business practices of the institution are critical to its operations, success, and brand enhancement.

A resident of Columbia, SC, Clark has served as vice president of a $1- billion division of AT&T which he converted from a money-losing division into the most profitable division in AT&T’s computer business.  Clark also worked with Gould Incorporated, General Electric, Gillette, and Exxon International.  To these positions, Clark brought a wealth of expertise as a successful relationship builder, mentor, and team motivator who is highly respected for his ability to develop consensus among diverse functional groups.

Clark served on the Benedict College Board of Trustees for 18 years, and he has been Chair of the University of South Carolina Research Foundation for three terms.  He has also served as an SC State Board member where he chaired the Finance and Management committee.  He also served as an Executive Director of the prestigious Bell Lab, the most respected research institution in the world at the time.

Along with his passion for education, Clark has a passion for building and flying aircraft.  He is an active member of the Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) Board of Directors and has performed as an Air Show Performer. As an engineer and a pilot, he brings the intricacy of “attention to detail” and the critical aspect of its effect on success.

Clark holds a Master of Science Degree in Management (Marketing) from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Sloan School of Management (M.I.T.); a Bachelor of Science Degree in Electrical Engineering and Computer Science from M.I.T.; an Honorary Doctor of Engineering and Technology from SC State University, and further studies in Global Leadership and Senior Management Development programs at the University of Michigan and Indiana University.