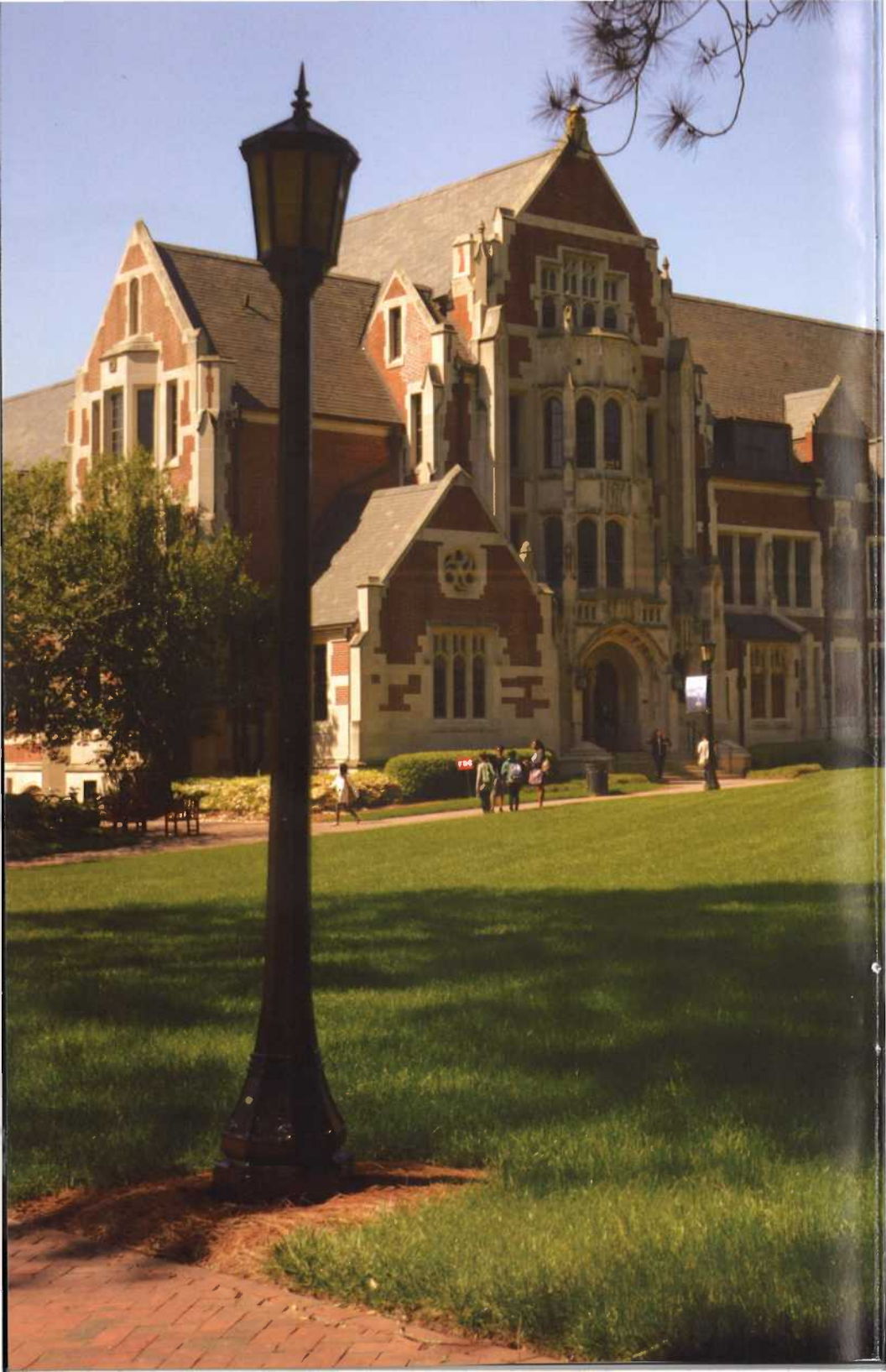
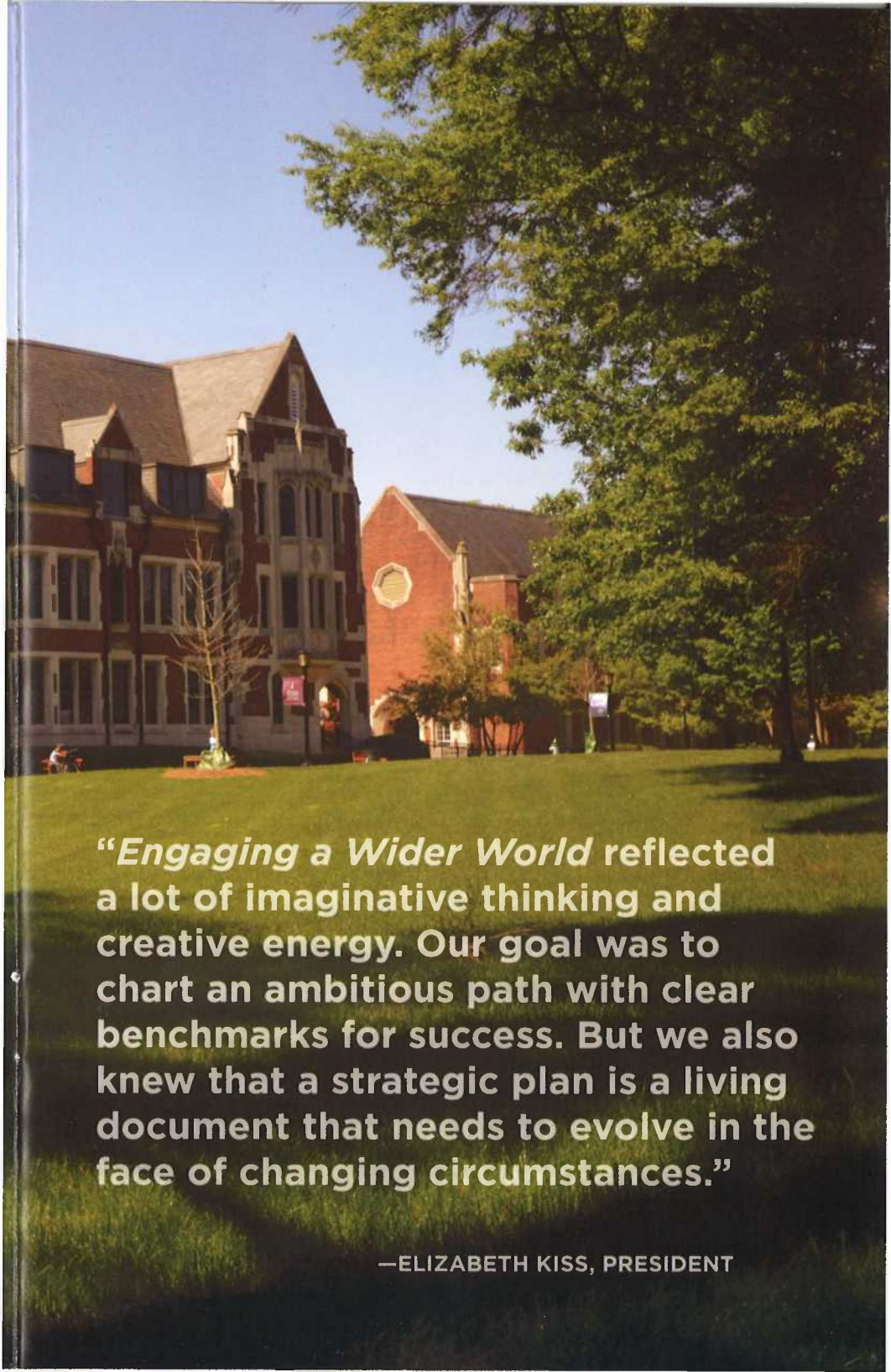




**Engaging a  
Wider World:  
A Final Report  
on the Agnes  
Scott Strategic  
Plan for 2014**





***“Engaging a Wider World* reflected a lot of imaginative thinking and creative energy. Our goal was to chart an ambitious path with clear benchmarks for success. But we also knew that a strategic plan is a living document that needs to evolve in the face of changing circumstances.”**

**—ELIZABETH KISS, PRESIDENT**

**As its 125th anniversary drew to a close, Agnes Scott marked another milestone: the official finish line of the college's strategic plan, *Engaging a Wider World: The Agnes Scott Strategic Plan for 2014.***

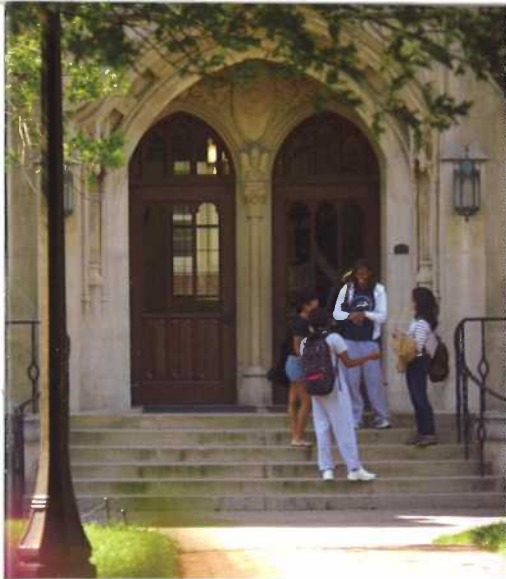
Approved by the Board of Trustees in October 2007 after a year of deliberations involving faculty, staff, students, alumnae and parents, *Engaging a Wider World* set out an ambitious vision for strengthening Agnes Scott by launching new academic programs and signature initiatives; linking the liberal arts to experiential learning opportunities across the region and around the world; becoming a model of campuswide commitment to ethical reflection, deliberation and action; and attracting new students, institutional partners and resources.

"*Engaging a Wider World* reflected a lot of imaginative thinking and creative energy. Our goal was to chart an ambitious path and establish clear benchmarks for success," says President Elizabeth Kiss. "But we also knew that a strategic

plan is a living document that needs to evolve in the face of changing circumstances."

Those changing circumstances arrived quickly. Less than a year after the plan's approval, the global economy plunged into the worst recession since the Great Depression. Agnes Scott's endowment, like those of colleges and universities across the country, lost 19 percent of its value, severely impacting one of the college's largest sources of revenue. Students' families struggled with unemployment and plummeting home values. In response, the college developed a strategic financial plan, *The Roadmap to 2020*, and completed a necessary but painful round of budget cuts.

"The Great Recession definitely slowed us down in achieving the goals of *Engaging a Wider World*," notes Kiss. "But looking back now, we've accomplished



quite a lot of what we set out to do back in 2007. This is pretty remarkable, and a real testament to the talent and energy of our faculty and staff and the generosity of our alumnae and friends.”

**Here is a roundup of key accomplishments coming out of *Engaging a Wider World*:**

### **A Center for Women's Global Leadership**

The plan envisioned a signature initiative at Agnes Scott that would link the liberal arts to women's global leadership. This idea became the seed of SUMMIT, which, starting in the fall of 2015, will provide every Agnes Scott student with a four-year experience focused on global learning and leadership development. “Sometimes, the ingredients needed to bring a



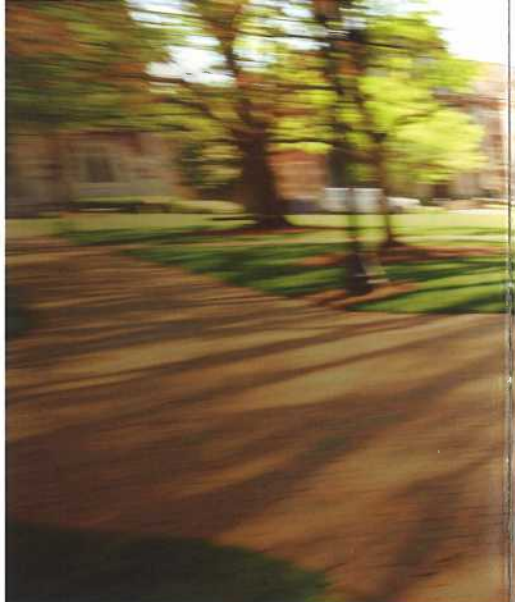
#### **New majors and minors:**

1. Africana Studies
2. Business Management
3. Education
4. Environmental & Sustainability Studies
5. Film & Media Studies
6. Human Rights
7. Neuroscience
8. Organizational Management
9. Public Health





**Number of Fulbright  
Scholars, 2009–2014**



**New partnership programs:**

**With GA Tech:** Bridge to Business program and MBA Linkage program

**With Emory:** Dual-Degree programs in computer science and Joint Enrollment program with the Rollins School of Public Health

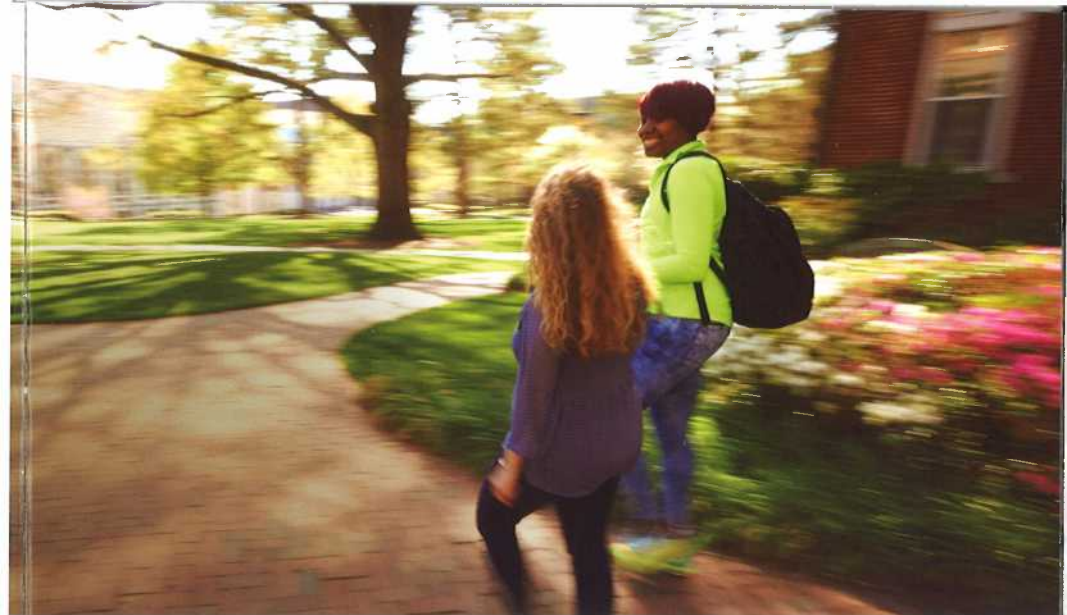


**With the Centers for Disease Control:** Bevier Internship program

vision to reality take time to assemble,” notes Kiss. “The Center for Women’s Global Leadership had a few false starts and stumbles along the way. But as the saying goes, we’ve ‘failed forward.’ SUMMIT is much bolder than our original vision because it takes the ideas behind a Center for Women’s Global Leadership and scales them up, making them a defining feature of every student’s Agnes Scott experience and indeed of the college itself.”

**Dynamic Liberal Arts  
NEW MAJORS AND  
MINORS:**

Between 2007 and 2014, the college launched nine new academic majors or minors, including two majors—neuroscience and public health—that are now among the most popular on campus. Many of these new academic concentrations are



interdisciplinary, helping students draw on different modes of inquiry to address important issues and problems.

#### **NEW PARTNERSHIPS:**

Agnes Scott also launched new partnership programs with Atlanta institutions, including dual-degree and joint enrollment programs with Emory and Georgia Tech. “These new programs in business, computer science and public health enhance our liberal arts curriculum through smart growth,” explains Kiss. “They leverage resources in our own backyard to expand the learning opportunities available to Agnes Scott students.”

**CAMPBELL HALL:** *Engaging a Wider World* envisioned “creating a vibrant space for intellectual community and cross-disciplinary synergy in Campbell Hall.”

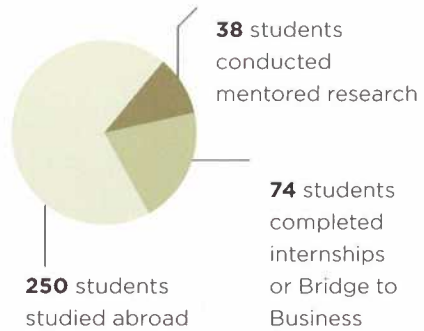
The \$15 million transformation of Campbell Hall into a living/learning community did just that. As part of this renovation, the new Jones Center for Academic Excellence on the ground floor of Campbell Hall co-located the college’s teaching centers, creating a vibrant 24/7 space for intellectual community.

**PROMISE SCHOLARS:** While both the name and program details have evolved over time, the college’s effort to promote success and persistence in science-related fields has borne fruit in the GEMS (Generating Excellence in Math and Science) program, in the creation of a new Resource Center for Math and Science, and in the Goizueta STEM Success Initiative, supported by a \$1 million grant from The Goizueta Foundation.

# 362

## students have received Advantage Awards

providing up to \$3,000 for a student to study abroad, pursue mentored research, or complete an internship or Bridge to Business. Since the program's inception:



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## Agnes Advantage

This goal focused on the creation of “an integrated sequence of curricular and co-curricular learning opportunities to engage students in their local and global communities.” Over time, this broad definition was narrowed to three key learning experiences: study abroad, internships and mentored research. The new Advantage Awards program, created through *The Greatness Before Us* campaign, provides students with up to \$3,000 to support these experiences. To date, the college has raised \$3.5 million in gifts and pledges for Advantage Awards and 362 students have benefited from them.

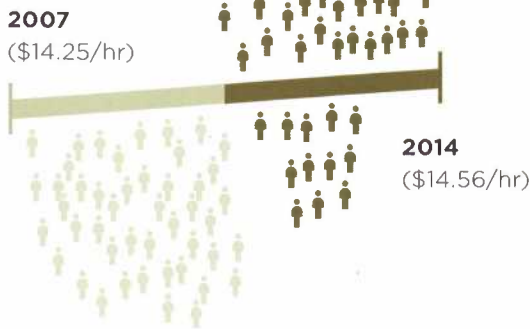
The college also strengthened each component of Agnes Advantage through enhanced staff support and programming, including an innovative project to enhance undergraduate research

in the humanities that was supported by a \$200,000 grant from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

In 2014, Agnes Advantage became the primary focus of the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) developed as part of the college’s successful reaffirmation of accreditation effort. “Agnes Advantage has provided life-changing opportunities to students,” notes Loidans Professor of Psychology Jenny Hughes, who directs the QEP, “and through the QEP we will be able to further strengthen this effort and more rigorously assess its outcomes.”

Several additional elements originally included in Agnes Advantage have now been incorporated into SUMMIT, especially the use of a digital portfolio to help students integrate their learning across their four years at Agnes Scott.





### Living Wage

35 of the 47 college employees whose wages were below the living wage target in 2007 earn at or above the target.

### Living Honorably

Many aspects of the college have been affected by initiatives arising out of this goal, which called on Agnes Scott to “become a living laboratory of campuswide commitment to justice, courage, integrity, respect and responsibility.”

**LIVING WAGE:** A new Living Wage policy approved by the Board of Trustees established a living wage target for all full-time college employees. The target, based on statistics on housing costs compiled by the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development, was set at \$14.25 in 2007 and raised to \$14.56 in 2012. The college provided supplemental wage increases to employees earning less than the target, and has made steady progress over time. In 2007, 47 staff positions earned under \$14.25 an hour.

Today, that number has been reduced to 12 staff earning less than the \$14.56 target.

One notable effort was a voluntary decision by a number of faculty in 2008 to forgo their salary increase if the college agreed to distribute these funds to employees earning under the living wage target. This effort resulted in a nine cents-per-hour increase for these employees. The college also developed an official Compensation Philosophy and provided equity raises to several groups of faculty and staff to bring them closer to benchmarks.

**STAFF COUNCIL:** An elected Staff Council was created to provide staff with a voice in college governance and more opportunities to shape campus culture. Through the council, staff are represented on campuswide committees and board committees, and the chair

### Sustainability

Percentage of campus waste diverted from landfills through recycling and composting:



### Square feet on campus designed to be LEED-certified:



reports at meetings of the Board of Trustees. Staff Council also plays a major role in promoting well-being and campus spirit through educational and social programming for faculty and staff.

### DIVERSITY & INCLUSION:

The plan's commitment to enhancing campus diversity and inclusion has resulted in new initiatives to educate and engage students, faculty and staff, including Trans101 training and Think, Live, Engage, a dialogue series bringing students, faculty and staff together to tackle diversity topics from race to politics to religion to gender identity. In 2014, the college launched the annual Gay Johnson McDougall Symposium on Race, Justice and Reconciliation, named for distinguished alumna Gay Johnson McDougall '69x, the first African-American student to attend Agnes Scott.

**SUSTAINABILITY:** With leadership from Director of Sustainability Susan Kidd '78 and the support of faculty, staff, students, alumnae and friends, the college made remarkable progress in this area, dramatically reducing campus waste through recycling and composting, going trayless in Evans Dining Hall, creating a \$550,000 Green Revolving Fund for energy efficiency investments, and installing a geothermal array for Campbell Hall and five solar arrays around



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# 8

**Conference championships won by ASC sports teams since 2007**



**Students engaged in fitness/intramurals**

10/11

campus. The college's Climate Action Plan calls for Agnes Scott to achieve climate neutrality by 2037, with a 20 percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions attained thus far.

### **Scottie Spirit**

Through a creative partnership with SnapFitness, the college brought a 24/7 state-of-the-art fitness center to campus in 2013. Under the energetic leadership of then-Athletic Director Joeleen Akin, the Scotties have achieved unprecedented success in intercollegiate play, with three teams garnering a total of eight conference championships since 2007. ZipCars and a bike loan program have expanded the transportation options available on campus, including a weekend bus service which began in spring of 2015.

The Office of Alumnae Relations launched a number of popular programs to connect students and alumnae, including the award-winning Scottie Book Month, and the Office of Marketing and Public Relations created The Irvine, a daily digital newsletter for the campus, and Connect the Scotts, a monthly news digest. The Betty Pope Scott Noble '44 Heritage Center opened in McCain Library, and Flat Agnes spread Scottie Spirit far and wide, traveling the world and soaring into space as part of the college's 125th anniversary celebration.

### **Smart Growth**

The Great Recession brought significant financial pressures to bear on small liberal arts colleges like Agnes Scott. The college and its Board of Trustees responded by creating a multiyear financial



### Top 10 entering classes:

- #1: Class of 2014 (265 students)
- #4: Class of 2017 (252 students)
- #7: Class of 2009 (237 students)
- #10: Class of 2016 (232 students)

forecasting model and strategic financial plan, The Roadmap to 2020. The Roadmap has provided strong financial discipline, enabling the college to sustain a strong credit rating. Healthy enrollments—including some of the largest first-year classes in college history—have helped by providing increased tuition revenue to offset declines in endowment spending. And a Student Success Survey spearheaded by the Office of Academic Advising led to an array of changes across campus to promote student retention.

Another success was the creation of an Office of Sponsored Programs, which since its establishment has assisted faculty in securing \$2.6 million in federal research funds, all for projects that involve students in research. And in fall 2014, an associate



### *The Greatness Before Us* campaign progress

#### Goal:

\$100 million

#### Progress:

\$94.6 million  
(as of June 30, 2015)



vice president for graduate and extended programs, Tish Szymurski, joined the Agnes Scott community to spearhead an effort to identify, market test and roll out new educational offerings.

Last but certainly not least, the college launched *The Greatness Before Us*, its \$100 million comprehensive campaign that has secured significant resources to support all of the goals of *Engaging a Wider World*.

### **Lessons for the Future**

How successful was *Engaging a Wider World*? “We had some hits and misses,” notes Kiss.

“But I’m very proud of what we accomplished overall. We’ve also learned some valuable lessons for the future. The college’s next plan, which we will bring to the Board of Trustees for approval in the fall of 2015, will be more narrowly focused, better integrated with financial planning and more strongly grounded in market research. But it will also have strong continuities with our 2007 plan. Indeed, Agnes Scott’s strategic initiatives today, from our QEP to SUMMIT, are in many ways an amplification of *Engaging a Wider World*.”



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**—ELIZABETH KISS, PRESIDENT**



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