

Furman University Names Anthony Herrera First-Ever Chief Innovation Officer

Former Toyota executive to drive acclaimed South Carolina university's innovation agenda

GREENVILLE, SC, USA, June 30, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Furman](#)

University has taken another step to deeply engage its students and the greater [Greenville](#) community in innovation and entrepreneurship by naming [Anthony Herrera](#) the university's first chief innovation officer, effective July 1.

In his new role, Herrera will create opportunities for undergraduate students to engage in entrepreneurial and innovative activities, build corporate and professional development certificates and drive the university's innovation agenda.

He will also continue in his role as executive director of the Furman Institute for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (Furman I&E), which has built a strong foundation of relationships with public and private organizations and community leaders in Greenville, the Upstate and across South Carolina.



Anthony Herrera named Furman University Chief Innovation Officer



FURMAN
UNIVERSITY

Furman University names new executive

"Anthony has led the way in creating an innovation and entrepreneurial environment at Furman, both within the university and with state and local organizations," said Furman University President Elizabeth Davis. "This new title recognizes the work that Anthony has already been doing — expanding and enhancing opportunities for students and helping our university work more innovatively with the community."

“

Furman has all the right ingredients to be a national leader in the space of innovation and entrepreneurship and an integral partner to the Upstate's entrepreneurial and innovation community.”

*Anthony Herrera, Furman
University Chief Innovation
Officer*

Other universities across the country are creating chief innovation officer positions. The new roles reflect a convergence of factors happening in higher education, Herrera said.

“There is a need to deliver increased value and more opportunities for students, to be a contributor to communities in solving our greatest challenges, and to do this in ways that are financially sustainable,” he said.

For Furman, Herrera said, Greenville is becoming distinguished as an innovation and entrepreneurial hub among mid-size cities, “so the city's putting intentional effort and resources toward this and the university can

come alongside and be catalytic for greater impact. When the university and the city work together for common goals, everyone wins.”

As Greenville thrives, the opportunities for students include increased internship and job placements, and access to expert speakers and mentors from the business and non-profit sectors. Meanwhile, Furman continues to be a source of talent for the local area.

Herrera also will lead an effort to increase the offering of corporate and professional development programs and non-degree certificate programs, such the Women's Leadership Institute, Design Thinking and Adaptive Leadership.

Furman I&E, which was named an Outstanding Emerging Entrepreneurship Center in 2020 by the Global Consortium of Entrepreneurship Centers, has already established relationships with area innovation organizations. In December 2020, Furman I&E joined the City of Greenville's economic development team, NEXT and VentureSouth, to co-locate in offices in downtown. It also will launch this fall a program called GVL Starts, an eight-week experience that teaches community members how to launch a successful venture and provides access to coaching, mentoring and start-up grants needed to make it happen. The Greenville Local Development Corporation, the South Carolina Department of Commerce, the City of Greenville and Venture South are all partners in the program.

“This is an exciting opportunity to be a part of a leading liberal arts and sciences university in a city that is being recognized on a national and global level, and at a time that is such a pivotal moment in higher education,” Herrera said. “Furman has all the right ingredients to be a national leader in the space of innovation and entrepreneurship and an integral partner to the city and Upstate's entrepreneurial and innovation community.”

Before coming to Furman in 2018, Herrera spent more than 18 years in talent management and

development roles for global organizations, including as the former leader for Toyota Motor North America's executive succession and leadership development team. Prior to Toyota, Herrera served as the executive director at SMU Cox School of Business and launched a nationally recognized center of excellence assisting Fortune 1,000 and non-profits recruit, retain and develop diverse leaders. Herrera earned his bachelor's and master's degrees in accounting from the SMU Cox School of Business.

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