

John de la Howe Foundation Secures \$730,000 to Launch Endowment Supporting Students Who Will Sustain SC Agriculture

Historic gifts ignite a bold campaign powering South Carolina's only residential agricultural high school

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EINPresswire.com/ -- The John de la Howe Foundation has secured \$730,000 in historic gifts, establishing a general endowment fund to sustain the South Carolina Governor's School for Agriculture through the annual earnings it generates.

These estate gifts, entrusted by donors over decades, were safeguarded by the state through the school's transition. With this decision, these funds are secured to do what matters most: to fuel the mission of preparing the next generation of South Carolina's agricultural leaders.



John de la Howe Foundation ratifying the endowment. Left to right: Georgia LeRoy Seabrook, Stacie Brown Smith, Dr. Timothy Keown, Honorable Judge John H. Gray, Mary Frances Jowers, Bob Coble, Elizabeth Zeck, Lindsey Shea, (back row) Jordan Martin.

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Agriculture is South Carolina's leading industry, and our students are its future.”

*Dr. Timothy Keown, President
of the SC Governor's School
for Agriculture*

“This is more than a milestone, it's the beginning of a powerful new chapter,” said Stacie Smith, Executive Director of the Foundation. “\$730,000 is the seed. Our vision is a multimillion-dollar endowment that will secure this school's future for generations. We're inviting South Carolina's farmers, businesses, and philanthropists to help us grow it, expanding opportunities for students statewide.”

The Foundation ensures that every legacy gift, whether written centuries ago or pledged today, continues to translate into real impact for students and

the future of agriculture.

Georgia LeRoy Seabrook, Chair of the Foundation Board, underscored the momentum:

"This is about more than an investment. It reflects decades of generosity and belief in agricultural education," said Ms. Seabrook. "We are grateful for the donors whose commitments helped lay this foundation. With an endowment, the principal is preserved forever, and only the interest is spent, ensuring that every gift continues working year after year. We are planting the endowment today that will shape innovators, problem-solvers, and industry leaders tomorrow."

Dr. Timothy Keown, President of the Governor's School for Agriculture, added:

"Agriculture is South Carolina's leading industry, and our students are its future. This endowment is the key to scaling opportunities, growing partnerships, and staying at the forefront of agricultural innovation in South Carolina. It strengthens the talent pipeline and makes our state more competitive on a national scale."

A Call to Invest in the Future

Because the principal of an endowment can never be spent, its impact depends entirely on how much the fund grows. Additional contributions increase the annual earnings available for student programs, turning today's gifts into tomorrow's expanded opportunities, scholarships, and innovations.

Ways to invest include:

Lifetime Gifts - Cash or stock contributions, real estate gifts, donor-advised fund grants, or IRA charitable distributions.



SC Governor's School for Agriculture

AT JOHN DE LA HOWE

Focused on meeting the needs of modern farms and growing the future leaders in South Carolina's largest industry.



Farm life on the campus of South Carolina's only residential agricultural school. Our school, the first statewide program of its kind in the nation, allows students to receive hands-on training in agriculture, agribusiness, forestry, land management, science, and more.

Planned Gifts - Bequests, beneficiary designations, charitable trusts, or estate gifts of property or assets.

Transformational Gifts - Leadership or naming-level contributions, endowed scholarships, corporate partnerships, or multi-year pledges.

Become a Founding Endowment Partner and help build the multimillion-dollar endowment that will sustain South Carolina's agricultural future by visiting jdlhfoundation.com

Momentum Forward

Since reopening in 2020, the Governor's School for Agriculture has seen one success after another. This \$730,000 endowment launch represents the latest sign of the school's trajectory: growing stronger, more innovative, and more aligned with Dr. de la Howe's original vision every year.

That momentum reflects the leadership of Dr. Timothy Keown, who is positioning the school for long-term success, and the persistence of Stacie Smith, who spearheaded the stewardship of these funds. Together, they are driving bold progress for South Carolina agriculture and for the young leaders who will carry it forward.

"This is just the beginning," Smith said. "We are deeply grateful for the generosity that helped establish this foundation for growth. We are building something permanent, powerful, and worthy of South Carolina's \$52 billion Ag industry. Agriculture touches every life, every community, every day, and we intend to give it the future it deserves."

Honoring Dr. John de la Howe's Vision

Nearly 228 years ago, Dr. John de la Howe, one of South Carolina's earliest philanthropists, gave his entire estate in his last will and testament to establish an agricultural seminary for boys and girls. His vision was bold: that young people would be educated in agriculture as a pathway to opportunity. Today, that vision has expanded into a statewide residential high school, and with the launch of this endowment, the Foundation is ensuring that his legacy not only survives but thrives in the modern era.

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