



Clemson Legacy Connection

PLANNED GIVING NEWSLETTER

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Passing the Torch to a New Generation of Tigers - Stephen '99 and Hunter Forstchen '99

The orange sunsets over Tillman Hall, the hum of Tiger Rag rolling through Bowman Field, and the steady rhythm of students crossing Library Bridge - there's nothing quite like fall at Clemson. The campus buzzes with energy as new Tigers find their footing, soaking in every moment from first football games to late-night study sessions fueled by Paw Points and caffeine.



Among the many proud Clemson parents walking campus this fall are Stephen '99 and Hunter Forstchen '99, who are watching their son Parker experience freshman life at Clemson for the first time. Their daughter, Katie, hopes to join him next year - making the Forstchens a true Tiger family.

The Forstchens enjoy reminiscing about their college days, which prompted them to consider investing in Clemson's future - a decision they made while their Clemson story continues to unfold.

Where It All Began: A Clemson "Meet-Cute"

Every Clemson love story seems to start somewhere between the Horseshoe and Death Valley - and Stephen and Hunter's began right there in the heart of campus.

It was January 1995. Hunter lived in Lever, Stephen in Mauldin. They met through mutual friends, twice in the same day, in fact. "We were introduced in a friend's dorm room and then again that night at a fraternity gathering," Hunter recalls with a smile.

After a chemistry test (both literal and figurative), the two walked back across campus together. When they reached Mauldin, Stephen made an irresistible offer: “*Want to come in and watch cable?*”

Cable TV might not sound romantic today, but back then, it was cutting-edge — and Mauldin was one of the first dorms to have it. “He totally reeled me in with the cable line,” Hunter laughs. “Students today wouldn’t even recognize the sound of a dial-up modem, but that was our soundtrack in the mid-’90s.”



From the Horseshoe to Forever

Thirty years later, the Forstchens are celebrating more than just their silver wedding anniversary - they are celebrating the full-circle magic of watching their son experience the same campus that shaped their lives.

“Watching Parker walk around the same places where we once studied, laughed, and fell in love - it’s surreal,” Hunter says.

Hunter grew up a Clemson fan thanks to her father, Neil C. Robinson Jr. ’66. “We listened to Clemson football on the radio every Saturday,” she said. “When I finally visited campus and stood on the Library Bridge, it just *felt* like home.”

Stephen’s Clemson moment came when he visited campus and was struck by its balance - strong academics, passionate sports culture, and that unmistakable feeling of belonging. “It just felt right,” he said. “Peaceful, welcoming, and full of possibility.”

Lessons Beyond the Classroom

Like many Tigers, the Forstchens say Clemson gave them much more than degrees - it helped shaped them and offered many life lessons. Both took part in co-op programs, gaining real-world experience before graduation.

Hunter, a marketing major, worked in human resources at Bosch in Anderson. “That co-op taught me discipline,” she said. “Even planning for cows on the road during my 30-minute drive to work - that’s real-world problem solving!”

Stephen, a computer engineering major, had a tougher experience when he and his co-op classmates were laid off just two weeks into the semester. “That moment challenged us and helped us build resilience,” he said. “Engineering teaches you



how to keep going after failure. That experience has served me well ever since.”

Their Clemson years ended with an unforgettable study abroad trip to France, Italy, and Germany. “Six weeks together in Europe right after graduation - that’s where our next chapter really began,” Hunter said.

Life After Clemson - and a Legacy in the Making

After graduation, the couple married, built their careers, and raised Parker and Katie in North Carolina. Now, as Parker enjoys his own Clemson journey, their connection to the university has deepened.

“I told my dad, I was born a Clemson daughter, became a Clemson student and alumna, then a Clemson wife - and now, a Clemson mom,” Hunter said. “It’s amazing how life comes full circle.”

Paying It Forward - Now, Not Later

A few years ago, the Forstchens began thinking seriously about how to give back to the place that gave them so much. “We realized we didn’t have to wait until retirement to make a difference,” Stephen said.

Their planned gift will support student scholarships, ensuring that future generations will have the opportunity to experience Clemson life - the same way they and now Parker have.

“When we learned that establishing an endowment was actually attainable for us, it changed everything,” Hunter explained. “We’re not millionaires - we’re just passionate Clemson people who want to invest in the next generation.”

Their philosophy is simple: you don’t have to be at the end of your career to start giving back. You just need to have the passion and courage to get started.

A Message to Fellow Tigers

The Forstchens' story is a reminder that Clemson is more than a place - it's a lifelong family. It's game days in orange and white, late nights at Cooper Library, friendships made under the oaks, and the roar of Death Valley that echoes in your heart long after you've graduated.

"We don't want our gift to be about us," Hunter said. "We want it to be about making an impact - helping future students fall in love with Clemson the same way we did."

Their story is a powerful call to action for all who love this great University: You can make a difference - right now. Whether through a planned gift, a current gift, or a simple conversation about what's possible, every act of generosity moves Clemson Fiercely Forward.

So many of life's defining moments begin on this campus - where friendships spark, dreams take shape, and generations of Tigers discover their purpose. The Forstchens remind us that you don't have to wait until "someday" to make an impact. The time is now. By planning your gift today, you can help light the way for tomorrow's students and ensure that the Clemson experience - that unmistakable feeling of belonging and pride - continues to shape lives for decades to come.

Join the Forstchens in building the future of Clemson. Give boldly. Give proudly. Give now.

Ever Loyal. Forever Grateful. Always Clemson.

JoVanna J. King

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