Clemson University ranks 25th among US public schools

BY MIKAYLA KREUZBERGER
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CLEMSON — It's a great day to be a Clemson Tiger.

On Wednesday, U.S. News & World Report released its annual guide to "America's Best Colleges," listing Clemson University as No. 25 on its list of top national public universities.

"We are very pleased and very proud of this honor," said Cathy Sams, chief public affairs officer at Clemson.

So, what does it take to be a "Top 25" university?

"It's complicated, and there are a lot of factors that go into it," Sams said.

The most important factor, perhaps, is the quality of students, according to Sams.

"Students at Clemson are very strong," she said. "That aspect is based on high school rankings and SAT scores."

Resources are also a factor, Sams said.

"It's not just about how much money Clemson receives, but how much money Clemson puts into the community," she said.

She pointed out that due to the past years' budget cuts, resources have weakened slightly.

Other factors include class size (14:1 student-faculty ratio at Clemson) and graduation and retention rates.

"Clemson has an 80 percent graduation rate right now, which is the highest it's been since I can remember," Sams said. "Students do very well in our classrooms."

Alumni retention is high at Clemson, too, Sams said.

"It's important to ask, 'Do your alumni continue to support you?' Yes. Clemson's alumni participation and giving is very high," she said.

Most specifically, Clemson hit the 25 mark because of its attention to "writing in the disciplines," a press release said.

Currently, there are several programs at Clemson that enable students not only to improve their writing skills, but to excel at them, Sams said.

SEE CLEMSON, PAGE A3



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Sikes Hall at Clemson University and the entire Clemson campus is abuzz with pride since the university was ranked No. 25 as a top public U.S. college by U.S. News & World Report on Wednesday.

Clemson: It also helps with recruiting ...

FROM PAGE A1

The Pearce Center for Professional Communications is an offset of the national Writing Across the Curriculum program, which, like the name suggests, ensures that not only the English major, but also the engineering, nursing and business students know how to write well.

Also, the Class of 1941 Writing Studio for Student Communications is a resource for students who need tutoring help, are interested in research, are looking for internships and want to know more about multimedia, Sams said.

Both organizations are on campus at Daniel Hall.

With emphasis in its diverse student writing programs, Clemson also topped the "up-and-coming schools" list at No. 7.

"Being ranked 25 (and 7) indicates the high quality of undergraduate experience at Clemson," Sams said. "That includes education, quality of life (Clemson is often ranked as a school with the happiest students, noted Sams), school spirit and Clemson's beautiful campus.

"It also helps with recruiting students and faculty and staff, too."

Clemson has been named to the top 25 public colleges five times. The highest was at 22 in 2008.

Out of 115 colleges, the top three U.S. public colleges are University of California-Berkley, University of California-Los Angeles and University of Virginia. University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill is ranked 5th, Georgia Tech is ranked 7th, University of Georgia is ranked 21th and University of South Carolina, 55th.

mikayla@dailyjm.com | (864) 882-2375