Clemson spreads the wealth

Economic impact felt statewide

BY JESSICA SIBLEY
THE JOURNAL

CLEMSON — It's no secret that Clemson University prides itself on providing the state and nation with highly trained and educated alumni throughout a myriad of career fields.



Barker

But, a recent study by the Strom Thurmond Institute for Government and Public Affairs highlighted the university's immense economic impact throughout the state.

In total, the study found that over a 10-year period, Clemson University contributed millions of dollars more than it was ever awarded in state appropriations.

In addition, Clemson is responsible for upward of $1.8 billion in overall economic output, more than 20,000 jobs and a net return of $77 million to taxpayers each year.

According to Clemson University President James Barker, his university contributed $115 million in net local government revenue and an additional $980 million to residents' disposable income.

"From the beginning, Clemson's mission has been to further the prosperity of South Carolina and its campus has always been the entire state," Barker said. "This report provides just one indication of how large an impact Clemson has had, and will continue to have, on South Carolina's economic health."

The study also found that Clemson averaged about $1.6 billion in annual economic output over the period of research, which makes Seneca resident and business owner, Mark Thater, express a mixed bag of emotions.

"I wanted to come to this presentation today because I wanted to get some solid numbers on just how beneficial Clemson University is to our area and state," he said. "I was sick of my friends saying that other schools make more of a financial impact.

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I can't wait to prove them wrong. We are so lucky to have Clemson in our state. This just shows that even morwe."

Barker went on to say that the study does not include any information for the more than 60,000 alumni who are working inside and outside of the state's borders, while Robert Carey, research associate for the study, said the boundaries of the study need to be kept in mind.

"This is a very conservative economic impact story, which is limited to those economic factors that can be directly attributed to activities at or by the university," Carey said.

Carey went on to say that the study is mainly focused on activities and factors that occur in and around the Upstate, but the entire state is impacted.

"Our programs through extension and public service activities are available in all 46 counties throughout the state," Carey added.

The study did not include factors such as the income and productivity of Clemson graduates residing in the state, the value of Clemson's research activities, or the impact from the University's effect on quality of life in the region; while these factors are important, they are often difficult to quantify, Carey added.

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'... so lucky to have Clemson'

COUNTY BOX INFO

Pickens County — $665.3 million in total economic output that accounted for 10,652 jobs directly and indirectly, $309.3 million in household disposable income and $36 million in local government net revenue.

Anderson County — $101.9 million in total economic output that accounted for 2,001 jobs directly and indirectly, $123.6 million in household disposable income and $13.5 million in local government net revenue.

Oconee County — $92.2 million in total economic output that accounted for 1,290 jobs directly and indirectly, $112.9 million in household disposable income and $10.4 million in local government net revenue.

Tri-County area — $859.5 million in total economic output that accounted for 13,943 jobs, $545.8 million in household disposable income and $59.9 million in local government net revenue.

For a complete rundown of the study, visit http://www.clemson.edu/administration/president/economic-impact/

All of these numbers are for a 10-year-period.