'Two-peat' for city, Clemson University

Tandem tops Town-Gown list again

BY GREG OLIVER
THE JOURNAL

CLEMSON — Being recognized as the best in anything is special. However, when it happens two years in a row, it becomes even more special.

For the second consecutive year, The Princeton Review has ranked the city of Clemson and Clemson University as the number one tandem in Town-Gown relations. The pair not only received that honor in 2010 but also finished second in 2009.

Clemson Mayor Larry Abernathy said he was "very proud" to see both the city and university receive the honor in back-to-back years. Abernathy, who teamed with then interim Clemson University president Walter Cox in the1980s to establish the Joint City-University Committee, said the award wouldn't be possible without his late mentor.

"We can't receive any recognition in this arena without me remembering with great love and affection Dean Walter Cox," Abernathy said. "Walter would be so proud but, at the same time, we must continue to work together as a city and university every day because it can get away from us."

The Princeton Review asked 122,000 students at 373 top colleges to rate their schools on dozens of topics and report on their campus experiences. The Top 20 colleges in those categories and 57 other categories are featured.

"What an impressive compliment it is from the students on the Clemson campus and the entire city of Clemson," said Kim Griffo, executive director of the International Town-Gown Center headquartered at the Strom

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Children rush to hug the Clemson University Tiger at the First Friday Parade in 2009. The event is one of many examples of why the city of Clemson and the university are recognized as having the best Town-Gown relationship.

Clemson ranked top 'jock school'

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Thurmond Institute. "Great town-gown relationships don't just happen, it starts with top down leadership like Mayor Abernathy and (Clemson University) President (Jim) Barker making it a genuine priority for the students."

In addition to Town-Gown, Clemson University received a No. 1 ranking among "jock schools," meaning that intercollegiate, intramural and fraternity sports are popular. Clemson also ranked fifth among the schools where "everyone plays intramural sports" and on the list of schools with the happiest students.

Clemson University was recognized as a "green" school for its environmental policies. The university also received a rating of 96 out of 100 for quality of life, a 92 for fire safety and an 81 in its academic rating.

The university was also recognized for its "family atmosphere" and a student body that is "very Southern" and "loves football, goes to class the majority of the time and is concerned with passing while also taking time out to have fun."

The most recent addition to the relationship came two years ago when the city and university spearheaded what is now called the International Town-Gown Association, a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization.

The association includes a resource center for cities and universities across the U.S. that is located in Clemson.

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