The Riley Institute at 20 Years:

“Leaders are thoughtful. They seek data. They listen to others and respect differences. They act for the good of all people. That’s what I tried to do in my time in public service, and that’s what the Riley Institute’s programs are about.”

— Richard W. Riley, former S.C. Governor, former U.S. Secretary of Education, Chief Inspiration Officer, Riley Institute at Furman

On October 22, 1999, former U.S. Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin spoke at the Riley Institute’s first event as part of the launch of Furman University’s new Institute. The Institute’s goal was to “bring the world to Furman” for the benefit of Furman students and the community. It hoped to attract political figures and prominent journalists, to support students’ work in Washington and overseas, and to bring scholars in residence to Furman.

Now, in its 20th year, these goals have become realities, and the Institute has matured into a thriving enterprise that benefits Furman, its students, and community members across the state. Named for and carrying forward the work of former S.C. Governor and U.S. Secretary of Education Dick Riley, the Institute is focusing on principled leadership in its year-long 20th anniversary celebration.

The Institute’s “leadership, knowledge, impact” framework has found expression in a multi-pronged, vigorous and pragmatic effort to drive progress across South Carolina. It operates primarily at the intersections of public education and diversity, with more than 30 active programs reaching many Furman students and thousands of community members across the state each year.

LEADERSHIP  Shaping and engaging present and future leaders is central to the Riley Institute’s work:

- Through the Diversity Leaders Initiative (DLI), the Institute has built a statewide, cross-sector leadership body - Riley Fellows - with a shared commitment to progress in the state and skills that help them manage and lead their increasingly diverse workers, clients and constituents.

- The White-Riley-Peterson (WRP) Policy Fellowship teaches education leaders how to drive policy in support of expanded learning opportunities for children across the nation.

- Through its 30-member student Advance Team, student delegations to the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), and Advantage Scholars, the Institute cultivates leadership among Furman students through meaningful access to world, national and state leaders.

- The Emerging Public Leaders (EPL) program, focused on rising high school seniors from around the state, teaches young people to lead effectively in their communities.
The Institute’s annual Wilkins Awards Dinner recognizes excellence in bipartisan political leadership and civic leadership, helping to inspire and energize leadership efforts.

The Upstate Diversity Leadership Awards Celebration, presented in partnership with the Greenville Chamber of Commerce, recognizes youth and adult leaders whose work advances the progress of diverse people in the Upstate.

The annual WhatWorksSC Awards Celebration recognizes excellence in education innovation across the state.

**KNOWLEDGE**  The creation and sharing of data-supported information is critical to leaders’ abilities to effect positive change:

- The Institute creates knowledge around public education and other compelling policy issues and supports the expansion of effective practices through original research.

- The Institute disseminates knowledge through the WhatWorksSC Clearinghouse, an online collection of high-quality, innovative programs in public education in the state.

- Speakers at annual symposia share knowledge and help drive informed discussion of timely issues among community members and students. Past speakers include President Bill Clinton, former U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, former Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O’Connor, former Director of National Intelligence Mike McConnell, documentarian and filmmaker Dr. Henry Louis Gates, Jr., and journalist Chuck Todd.

**IMPACT**  The Riley Institute engages its statewide leadership network to address challenges critical to the state’s progress:

- The Institute is helping build a network of college-access focused, project-based learning driven New Tech Network schools across the state.

- Riley Fellows have built better communities across the state through 260 community service projects including creating safe summers for children in Charleston; teaming with high school students in Summerton to break down racial barriers; donating a food truck to help Greenville School District feed children in low-income communities in summer; and many more.

- Emerging Public Leaders have undertaken 240 community service projects across the state.

- Civics teachers from throughout South Carolina, graduates of the Teachers of Government program, are bringing their classrooms to life after a week-long experiential summer institute in Washington, D.C.

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