

# HISTORY OF ALBANY STATE UNIVERSITY

Founded in 1903, Albany State University continues to provide leadership in academic excellence, social change, and economic impact. A nationally top-ranked HBCU, ASU serves an increasingly diverse student body and community by offering a uniquely comprehensive array of programs, from associate to graduate degrees.

Joseph Winthrop Holley, the institution's founder and first president, established the Albany Bible and Manual Training Institute in Albany, Georgia. The new school was successful in its mission to provide religious and basic education, as well as teacher training to the local black population. In 1917, the state of Georgia began providing financial support to the school, granting it two-year status. The school added training in agriculture and was renamed the Georgia Normal and Agricultural College.

The institution eventually joined the University System of Georgia and, in 1943, was granted four-year status. Concentrating on teacher education and home economics, the school was again renamed, this time as Albany State College. Over the next few years, the College added majors in the humanities, social sciences, education, and health sciences.

After increasing the number of faculty with doctorate degrees by more than fifty percent, Albany State College began offering graduate degrees in 1981. With the growing success of the graduate programs, the Board of Regents, in 1996, approved the renaming of the institution to Albany State University. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the University continued to strengthen its mission, attracting nationally renowned scholars and researchers to its faculty and preparing students for leadership.

As ASU continued to grow, so did a newly established junior college in the Albany area. Founded in 1963, Albany Junior College provided students in Southwest Georgia and beyond access to higher education. When doors officially opened in 1966, 620 students enrolled in the institution. In 1987, the USG removed the word *junior* from all of its two-year institutions and the College became Darton College.

As part of its mission to serve its students and the region, Darton College committed to expanding its programs in nursing and the health sciences, expanding to 13 programs. As a result of this and other initiatives, such as the expansion of online programs, enrollment more than doubled after the year 2000. In this period, the campus facilities also grew, including the addition of a 427-seat theater and a massive physical education complex, among other improvements. In 2012, upon USG approval of the College's first four-year program, in nursing, the institution's name was changed to Darton State College.

On November 10, 2015, the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia voted unanimously to begin the process of consolidating Albany State University and Darton State College. That same day, Dr. Arthur N. Dunning became ASU's permanent president.

The newly established university retains the name Albany State University and unifies the distinction, values, and missions of the two institutions. One of Georgia's diverse, educational gems, Albany State University continues a combined legacy of more than 100 years of excellence in teaching and learning. The University prepares students to be effective contributors to a globally diverse society, where knowledge

and technology create opportunities for personal and professional success.

## Vision Statement

Albany State University will be a world-class comprehensive university and a powerful catalyst for the economic growth and development of Southwest Georgia. ASU will be recognized for its innovative and creative delivery of excellent educational programs, broad-based community engagement and public service, and creative scholarship and applied research, all of which enrich the lives of the diverse constituencies served by the University.

## Mission Statement

Albany State University, a proud member institution of the University System of Georgia, elevates its community and region by offering a broad array of graduate, baccalaureate, associate, and certificate programs at its main campuses in Albany as well as at strategically-placed branch sites and online. Committed to excellence in teaching and learning, the University prepares students to be effective contributors to a globally diverse society, where knowledge and technology create opportunities for personal and professional success. ASU respects and builds on the historical roots of its institutional predecessors with its commitment to access and a strong liberal arts heritage that respects diversity in all its forms and gives all students the foundation they need to succeed. Through creative scholarship, research, and public service, the University's faculty, staff, students, and administrators form strategic alliances internally and externally to promote community and economic development, resulting in an improved quality of life for the citizens of southwest Georgia and beyond.

## Guiding Principles

### Aspire to Excellence

Albany State University will aspire toward excellence in teaching and learning, thus becoming the first-choice institution for students from southwest Georgia and garnering recognition as a premier southern regional university.

### Embrace Diversity

As a historically black institution and led by a highly-diverse faculty and staff, Albany State University will embrace diversity in all its forms – including age, gender identity, race and ethnicity, country of origin, religion, ability level, sexual orientation, and veteran status – and seek to foster a similar acceptance and celebration of that diversity.

### Expand Access to Higher Education

As an access institution, Albany State University will promote student success for all by welcoming students from varying levels of academic preparation, keeping costs low, offering flexible class times and instructional modalities, and pairing high student expectations with exceptional mentoring, advising, and tutoring.

### Elevate Historically Underserved Populations

Albany State University will recognize and address the many challenges that face African Americans and other students of color, adult learners, first generation students, students from low socioeconomic backgrounds, and others from underserved populations, and form strong partnerships with K-12, government agencies, and community outreach organizations to increase access and success rates.

## **Promote Economic Development**

As part of its commitment to teaching and learning, Albany State University will promote economic development in Albany and throughout southwest Georgia by engaging in applied research, aligning its resources in support of identified needs, developing and enhancing academic programs to meet evolving needs, forming broad strategic partnerships, supplying a trained workforce, and fostering a sense of entrepreneurship.

## **Degrees and Certificates**

Albany State University awards Certificates, the Associate of Arts degree (A.A.), the Associate of Science degree (A.S.), the Associate of Applied Science degree (A.A.S.), the Bachelor of Arts degree (BA), the Bachelor of Science degree (BS), Master's Degrees, and the Education Specialist Degree.

Students who complete the requirements for one of the college transfer programs are awarded either an A.A. or an A.S. degree depending upon their particular program of study. The A.S. degree is also awarded to students who complete a career program in certain health areas. The A.A.S. degree is awarded to students who complete other two-year career programs. Certificates are awarded to students who complete certain planned objectives or programs requiring less than two years of work.