



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Queens University Athletics Gets \$2 Million Boost

*Royals transition to NCAA Division I fuels unprecedented support from donors, fans*



CHARLOTTE, N.C. (August 16, 2022) – Queens has much to celebrate as the Royals make their Division I debut in the women's soccer home opener this week. On campus, excitement for the university's first competition since joining the ASUN Conference is matched only by the university's athletic fundraising momentum. Several Charlotte leaders have already stepped up to support the university's move to Division I with \$2 million in philanthropic contributions. Since the transition to NCAA

Division I was announced, philanthropic support for Queens' athletic programs has tripled, with signs of even more growth on the horizon.

Investments in the transition to D1 are part of the university's larger strategic initiatives, including a comprehensive suite of investments across the university in enrollment, academic programs, health and wellness, facilities and the arts.

Jeffrey "JB" Brown MBA '03, CEO of Ally Financial and chair of the Queens Board, saw the impact this move to D1 could have on the trajectory of the university saying, "I'm proud to be a part of a diverse board made up of dedicated business, civic, and community leaders who believe in this university, believe in the leadership of President Lugo and his team, and believe with our help, this incredible university can achieve the vision outlined in its strategic framework. That's why it doesn't surprise me at all to see that so many others in and beyond the board room have joined Sara and me in stepping up to invest in the future of Queens."

Charlotte leader and university trustee Mary Anne "M.A." Rogers was among the first to recognize the time was right for Queens to further invest and commit to excellence in all endeavors including moving to Division I. Brown and Rogers were joined by trustee families Karen and Brandon Perry, principal at Highmarket Properties, and Susan and Bob Salvin, founder and CEO of Salvin Dental Specialties in making leadership gifts to support the D1 transition.

"We are so grateful to these Queens community members and families for this incredible display of support for our D1 transition," said Queens University of Charlotte President Dan Lugo. "These investments and the broad community support behind them validate our goal of growing as a central partner in the continued growth of Charlotte and affirms our unique and dynamic position within the higher education market."

The move to D1 athletics will contribute to expanding the university's market position and visibility in support of its goal to be universally recognized as Charlotte's premier private university and bring national attention to the university's strategic framework which focuses on the themes of empowering economic mobility, cultivating multidisciplinary collaboration, establishing a comprehensive approach to health and wellness, investing in employee development, recruitment, and retention, and leading in diversity, equity and inclusion.

From the university's recent announcement of Lowe's and Ally as the inaugural partners in the Charlotte Talent Initiative, an immersive cohort program designed to change the economic trajectories of local high school graduates and families, to its partnership with Atrium Health to expand health and wellness resources on campus, investments in multidisciplinary programs, and the creation of the Center for Digital Equity as a part of the Mayor's Racial Equity initiative, President Lugo believes that Queens is poised to take its place as one of the new forerunners of American higher education.

"The histories and growth of Queens and Charlotte are intrinsically linked with significant partnerships throughout the years. For 165 years Queens has been an engine of not only individual opportunity, but of social change and innovation," Lugo said. "We are a leader and convener in Charlotte, and our move to D1 provides enhanced visibility for the impactful work we do day in and day out — both for our students and for the broader community. We would not have made it to this point without the courageous vision, support and commitment of our Charlotte partners and civic leaders who understand that the move to Division I is about so much more than athletics."

"This is an exciting time to be a Royals student athlete and fan and we deeply appreciate the support of our donors," said Cherie Swarthout, director of athletics at Queens. "This first game is not only the start of a history-making year for Queens, but as the only North Carolina school to compete in the ASUN and the only private Division I team in Charlotte, this is a moment for the entire city to celebrate."

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## **About Queens**

Queens University is a private, coeducational university located in Charlotte, N.C. The university serves nearly 2,500 students with 43 major and 63 minor undergraduate degree options and 12 graduate degrees. Students represent 44 states and 70 foreign countries. As part of the university's vision to promote educational experiences that nurture intellectual curiosity and promote global understanding, nearly two-thirds of traditional undergraduates participate in study abroad experiences and 100 percent take part in internships. The U.S. News & World Report ranked Queens 15th among regional universities in the south in its 2022 edition of Best Colleges.