



Week of August 24 – 28 2026

FROM DR. LESTER A. MCCORN

A WEEK OF PURPOSE, INSPIRATION & LION PRIDE

A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT MCCORN



Dear Paine College Family, Alumni, and Friends,

Welcome to a new academic year at Paine College!

There is something special about the beginning of a new year - the return of our students, the energy across campus, and the opportunity to renew our commitment to the mission and legacy of this great institution.

As we open the 2026-2027 academic year, I am excited about what lies ahead. We are moving forward with purpose, strengthening our academic community, expanding opportunities for our students, and continuing the transformative work that is positioning Paine College for an even brighter future.

To our new Lions - welcome to the Pride! To our returning students, faculty, and staff - welcome home. And to our alumni, donors, partners, and friends, thank you for continuing to believe in and stand with Paine College.

With Lion Pride,
Lester A. McCorn, Ph.D., D.Min.
 President, Paine College
Excellence Without Excuse

OPENING CONVOCATION

Inspired for the Year Ahead

Paine College extends our heartfelt appreciation to Dr. Kendrick D. Hooker, President of Augusta Technical College, for joining the Paine College family as the featured speaker for our 2026 Opening Convocation.

Dr. Hooker delivered an inspiring and encouraging message that challenged our students to embrace the opportunities before them, remain committed to their goals, and make the most of their educational journey.

His words reminded us of the power of purpose, perseverance, and preparation. Thank you, Dr. Hooker, for helping us begin the year inspired, encouraged, and ready to move Paine College forward.

The year has begun. The purpose is clear. And the Paine College Lions are ready to ROAR!





Week of August 24 – 28 2026
FROM DR. LESTER A. MCCORN

FALL II ENROLLMENT IS OPEN

It's Not Too Late to Become a Lion!

There has never been a better time to consider Paine College. We are continuing to remove barriers and create greater access to a Paine College education. Enrollment for our Fall II Session remains open, and the door to becoming a Lion is still open.

"Great news for prospective Paine College students: we've recently eliminated a major hurdle that has kept many talented students from pursuing their education with us."

Our admissions process is more accessible than ever. Whether you are a first-time college student, transfer student, or someone who started your college journey but did not finish, Paine College is ready to welcome you.

Your purpose is waiting. Your future is calling. Your Pride is ready.



FAITH IN FOCUS

PRIDE Forum • Wesley Fellowship

This week, our Paine College community gathered for another meaningful PRIDE Forum, hosted by the Wesley Fellowship. We were honored

to welcome Rev. Dr. Charles E. Goodman, Jr., Pastor of Tabernacle Baptist Church, as guest speaker.

His message encouraged students to remain grounded in their faith while navigating the opportunities, decisions, relationships, and challenges of the college experience.



HONORING SENATOR CHARLES W. WALKER

A Legacy of Leadership, Opportunity & Service

This week, our Paine College family joins the Augusta community and the State of Georgia in reflecting on the remarkable life and legacy of Senator Charles W. Walker - a trailblazing public servant, businessman, community leader, and longtime friend of our institution.

On Tuesday, August 25, Augusta came together to say a final farewell to a man whose influence helped shape this city and our state for generations. The gathering was more than a goodbye; it was a reminder of a life devoted to leadership, opportunity, community empowerment, and service.

Senator Walker made history as the first African American Majority Leader of the Georgia Senate. He understood that leadership was not simply about holding a position; it was about using that position to improve the lives of others.

His legacy holds special meaning for Paine College. As an instrumental champion of the Georgia HOPE Scholarship, he helped expand access to higher education for generations of Georgia students, including students attending HBCUs such as Paine.

Legacy is not simply what we accomplish during our lifetime - it is what continues because we lived.

We honor Senator Walker by continuing the work of building bridges, opening doors, creating opportunities, and lifting others as we climb. Rest in power and peace, Senator Charles W. Walker. Your legacy lives on.





Week of August 24 – 28 2026

FROM DR. LESTER A. MCCORN

WHY PAINE COLLEGE IS NECESSARY TODAY

MORE THAN 140 YEARS OF IMPACT

In a recent guest column, “Why Paine College Is Necessary Today,” I posed a question that reaches beyond the survival of our historic institution: Would Augusta and the CSRA be stronger or weaker without Paine College? Our history, our present impact, and our vision for the future make the answer clear.

For more than 140 years, Paine College has been an institution of opportunity, leadership, service, and transformation. Our graduates have become teachers, ministers, entrepreneurs, public servants, professionals, and civic leaders whose influence can be felt throughout Augusta, Georgia, and the nation.

From the courageous Paine students who challenged segregation in 1960 to generations of graduates who have strengthened schools, churches, businesses, families, and communities, Paine's legacy has always been about more than earning a degree - it has been about preparing people to make a difference.

That mission continues today. Our decision to forgive outstanding institutional debt for eligible former students whose education was interrupted by financial hardship represents our commitment to removing barriers and creating pathways back to completion.

Your story is not over. Come home. Finish what you started.

PAINE'S ECONOMIC IMPACT

According to UNCF's 2024 Transforming Futures: The Economic Engine of HBCUs study cited in the column, Paine generates approximately \$13 million in annual economic impact and supports 181 jobs in our local and regional economies.

Yet our true value cannot be captured by economic figures alone. It is found in families transformed by first-generation graduates, children inspired by Paine-trained teachers, congregations strengthened by our ministers, communities served by our civic leaders, and opportunities created by our alumni.

BUILDING THE PAINE OF THE FUTURE REQUIRES

As proud as we are of our history, our responsibility is not simply to preserve Paine - it is to prepare Paine for its next era.

Through Paine 2036: Preparation for Transformation, we are building toward a stronger, more innovative, and more consequential institution. Our vision includes growing enrollment, expanding graduate and online education, strengthening student success, revitalizing our campus, and developing academic programs aligned with emerging opportunities.

Priority areas include STEM, cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, health sciences and nursing, business and entrepreneurship, teacher education, and other high-demand fields.

**THE GOAL IS NOT SIMPLY A BIGGER PAINE.
THE GOAL IS A MORE CONSEQUENTIAL PAINE.**

We are preparing more teachers, healthcare professionals, technology leaders, entrepreneurs, artists, athletes, civic leaders, and first-generation graduates who will transform their families and communities.

THE LARGER QUESTION

“What can Augusta accomplish through Paine College?”

Paine College remains an essential part of the economic, educational, cultural, spiritual, and civic fabric of this community. Our past gives us credibility. Our present gives us responsibility. And Paine 2036 gives us a roadmap for the future.

That is why Paine was necessary then. That is why Paine is necessary now. And together, we will ensure that Paine College remains necessary for generations to come.



Week of August 24 – 28 2026

FROM DR. LESTER A. MCCORN

IGNITE: ON FIRE FOR PAINE



EVERY GIFT MATTERS. EVERY DONOR BECOMES PART OF A STUDENT'S JOURNEY.

At Paine College, we know that the promise of our institution lives in the dreams, determination, and potential of our students. Through our “IGNITE: On Fire for Paine” campaign, I invite every member of the Paine family - alumni, trustees, faculty, staff, friends, and community partners - to help us keep that promise burning brightly.

Your financial support provides more than dollars; it creates scholarships, strengthens academic opportunities, supports the student experience, and helps remove financial barriers that can stand between a student and graduation.

YOUR SUPPORT HELPS:

- ◆ Create scholarships and expand access
- ◆ Strengthen academic opportunities
- ◆ Support the student experience
- ◆ Remove financial barriers to graduation
- ◆ Invest in the next generation of Paine leaders

A CALL TO THE PAINE FAMILY

I ask you to join me in investing in the next generation of Paine College scholars, leaders, and changemakers. Together, we can ignite possibility, fuel purpose, and ensure that the flame of Paine continues to burn for generations to come.

Will you make your gift today and show that you are On Fire for Paine?

TOGETHER, LET US IGNITE THE FUTURE OF PAINE COLLEGE.