In its 200-year history, John de la Howe School has served at times as an agricultural seminary, a college preparatory school, a vocational school, and a facility for children in crisis. In 2018, the school closed to reinvent itself as the South Carolina Governor’s School for Agriculture. While the school plans to re-open in August 2020 with 80 students, the ultimate challenge is to expand the facilities over the next five years to house 325 students and additional faculty, as well as take advantage of the property’s natural and historic resources for the enjoyment and education of the public. In the span of a weekend, the UGA team met with the school’s employees and alumni, conducted site analysis, and finally showcased proposed design plans intended to accommodate the school’s growth while remaining sensitive to its historic context.
How can a historic school for orphans evolve its campus into a first-of-its-kind, residential high school for agricultural science?
John de la Howe School was willed to the state by its namesake in 1797 for the development of a school for orphaned boys and girls to learn manual labor trade skills.
The school has served at times as an agricultural seminary, a college preparatory school, a vocational school, and a facility for children in crisis.
In 2018, the school closed to reinvent itself as the **South Carolina Governor’s School for Agriculture** following the state’s similar Governor’s School models.

SC Governor’s School for Science & Mathematics  
Hartwell, SC

SC Governor’s School for Arts & Humanities  
Greenville, SC
TRADITIONAL CAMPUS PLAN

The historic 1300-acre property on Lake Strom Thurmond (known on the Georgia side as Clarks Hill Lake) includes...
Educational Buildings & Residential Cottages

Administrative Building

Huguenot Cottage
Pastures & Elliptical Lawn
Historic Dairy Barn Event Space
Hundreds of Acres of Timber
CHALLENGES OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

1. House **325 students** and additional faculty

2. Take advantage of the property’s natural and historic resources for the enjoyment & education of the public
DESIGN CHARRETTE
October 4-6, 2019
“CHARRETTE”

Design charrettes are multi-day, creative visioning sessions in which a team of designers and local stakeholders focus on a particular problem and arrive at a collaborative solution.
The charrette began with identifying significant sites on the school campus. Then, participants were asked, “What was important to you as a 15-year-old?” in order to develop common themes:

- Social Life
- Independence
- Education
- Recreation
Then, the UGA team toured the property with leaders of the new school’s...

- Agricultural operations

- Facilities division

- Educational programming
DESIGN NEEDS

- Additional housing
- Parking
- New school buildings
- Updated entrance
- Dairy Barn expansion
- Lab space
- Recreation fields
- Greenhouses
- Demonstration plots
- Event venues
- Outdoor gathering spaces
- Walking trails
The weekend progressed with intense planning and drafting sessions, site exploration, analysis, and periodic feedback from stakeholders.
ON SUNDAY AFTERNOON...

The charrette concluded with a final showcase of proposed design plans intended to accommodate the school’s growth whilst remaining sensitive to its historic context.
CAMPUS ZONES

DESIGN CONCEPTS
ADDITIONAL HOUSING

with parking, outdoor gathering spaces, and walking trails
As enrollment expands at John de la Howe School, the historic cottages can be expanded in the rear to house more students. New cottages can be placed between the existing cottages and constructed in a similar style.
COTTAGE REAR EXPANSION

Side View of Huguenot Cottage with Rear Addition
NEW COTTAGES & DUPLEXES

There is additional space for housing along Gettys Road and Tomb Road. The housing would match in style with the existing cottages and duplexes. Parallel parking could exist along Gettys Road.
COTTAGE LANDSCAPES

Land between the cottages can be used to create **outdoor leisure spaces**. Some possible options are boulder seating, benches, fire pits, hammocks, and flowering shrubs. **Parallel parking** can be added between cottages alongside the street. **Walking paths** keep students out of the way of traffic.
NEW SCHOOL BUILDINGS

with parking, outdoor gathering spaces, lab space, and walking trails
CAMPUS INFILL

Removing the current tennis courts and outdoor pool makes room for an expanded parking lot beside the academic buildings. An additional school building can be added behind the current gymnasium, as behind the current main school building (creating an interior quad space.)
COURTYARD QUAD & DORMITORY

Current rear view

Proposed
NEW ACADEMIC AREA

Additional academic buildings can be added in the cleared area across the street from the current academic buildings. The park behind the school buildings can be spruced up and include the fishing pond across the street, creating a connection between the existing and proposed academic areas. An additional parking lot could sit between the new school buildings and the men’s cottages.
RECREATION FIELDS

with greenhouses, demonstration plots, outdoor gathering & lab space, and walking trails
SPORTS COMPLEX & POND PARK

Students can use a restored baseball field, new tennis courts, or a flexible field space for team sports. Behind the sports complex is a proposed park area with a large pond (with potential for an aquaculture lab.)
GREENHOUSES & TRIAL GARDEN

Along the main road, additional greenhouses can be added beside the existing one. An outdoor trial garden can also be placed beside/behind the greenhouses for research and for visitors.
NEW GREENHOUSES & GARDEN
UPDATED ENTRANCE

with demonstration plots, parking, and walking trails
Beyond the Branch House (museum and welcome center) and entry security gate, one to two demonstration gardens can be placed to the right, and a demonstration pasture to the left leading to the barn structure.
DAIRY BARN EXPANSION

with event venues, parking, outdoor gathering spaces, and demonstration plots
DAIRY BARN COMPLEX
The proposals around the dairy barn include a creamery, farmers market, deli & gift shop, bee hives, amphitheater, event space, visitors center, animal display areas, crop display gardens, and pastures.
OVAL LAWN EVENT SPACE
with parking, outdoor gathering spaces, and walking trails
**OVAL LAWN**

The oval lawn is mostly kept open to be used as an event space. A plaza is added across from the cafeteria to increase outdoor seating in the area. Parking areas are added to the downhill areas of the lawn.
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Jennifer Lewis, Brandon Platt,
Dr. Barry Croom, Lu Flaherty,
Felipe Barrantes, Deborah Kim,
Ruohan Li, Saadia Rais