FORWARD TOGETHER

One of the great privileges of my role is getting a first look at this magazine before it reaches our broader community. This issue inspired me with its stories of groundbreaking insights and tangible progress in human wellbeing. On campus and across our state, our faculty and students are creating new knowledge and putting that into action through innovative projects and programs.

I believe you'll be just as inspired. UNCG is at a pivotal moment as we work to elevate our research enterprise to new heights. Our 2025–2030 Strategic Plan, adopted earlier this year, includes an ambitious and transformative goal: to achieve R1 Carnegie classification, the highest level of research excellence.

UNCG has long had a strong foundation in research across the physical sciences, health and wellness, social sciences, and humanities. Now, we're building on that legacy to fully realize our potential as a top-tier research university.

My top priority is to support our faculty and research scholars as they lead discovery, spark innovation, and foster our national and international leadership in critical fields. To that end, we are launching a Research Leadership Academy to give researchers access to the tools, mentorship, and resources they need to lead cutting-edge, high-impact research.

ACHIEVING R1 STATUS WILL POSITION UNCG TO RECRUIT AND RETAIN WORLD-CLASS FACULTY AND STUDENTS, DEEPEN PARTNERSHIPS WITH INDUSTRY, DRIVE ENTREPRENEURSHIP, AND DRAMATICALLY INCREASE OUR COMPETITIVENESS FOR EXTERNAL FUNDING.

THESE OUTCOMES WILL HAVE FAR-REACHING BENEFITS NOT JUST FOR UNCG, BUT FOR ALL OF NORTH CAROLINA.

- More high-quality, better-paying jobs for students and alumni
- Research that fuels innovation and spurs economic growth
- Knowledge that improves health, security, and opportunities across our communities

Importantly, we will continue to fulfill our mission of advancing social mobility and expanding opportunity for the students and communities we serve. In doing so, we are bringing to life our vision to redefine the public research university for the 21st century.

The stories you'll find in this magazine offer a vivid snapshot of that vision in action.

Our iCOMMAND initiative is making major strides in protecting and empowering members of the armed forces. Through research and tailored educational programs for veterans and active service members, we are contributing to their safety in deployment and their success after service.

Similarly, the new BRIGHT Institute will serve as a statewide hub for next-generation energy, battery, and critical materials research, and help train the workforce needed to power North Carolina's fast-growing clean energy sector. With Toyota investing $14 billion in a battery plant that's just 30 minutes from campus and expected to create 5,000 jobs, the BRIGHT Institute will prepare students and job seekers for success in this thriving industry.

Our researchers are exploring ways to improve health and wellbeing, from finding new medicines in natural products and new ways of safeguarding the environment to innovative mental health initiatives. Our multi-disciplinary efforts focused on energy will help keep North Carolina competitive globally as new technologies change how we transport goods and services and power our communities.

I invite you to explore these stories to learn more about the work our faculty and students are doing. This is just the beginning. I hope you will join us in supporting this exciting journey. Together, we are shaping a research enterprise that delivers bold solutions and lasting impact.

Sherine Obare
Vice Chancellor for Research and Engagement

THE CV

CURRENT ROLE:
Vice Chancellor for Research and Engagement

LAST JOB:
Dean, UNCG NC A&T Joint School of Nanoscience and Nanoengineering

EDUCATION:
B.S. in chemistry with a minor in biology, West Virginia State University
Ph.D. in chemistry, University of South Carolina

RESEARCH FOCUS:
Environmental contaminant detection and remediation; understanding of the fate, transport, and toxicity of anthropogenic nanomaterials; the development of nanoscale materials for alternative energy, biomass conversion, healthcare and drug delivery

Especially proud of her research on ways to defeat the growing problem of antimicrobial-drug resistance in bacteria, fungi, and other infectious organisms

ONE THING THAT SURPRISES PEOPLE ABOUT HER:
Has lived in seven countries across four continents