



Ignite Campaign Kickoff

**Given by Mark B. Rosenberg
on February 14, 2017**



This speech was presented to the MMC faculty and staff in attendance of the 2016 Ignite Campaign Kickoff Breakfast held at the Graham Center Ballrooms on February 14, 2017.

Good morning! Thank you for being here! I look out, see all of your faces and am reminded of why we're here: because we believe in our FIU, and we know that the future of our FIU is in our hands... it's up to us to pave the path forward!

Out there, the world is changing. Every day, it seems there are reports of continuing violence. Exclusivity and divisiveness. Rising anger, uncertainty and frustration. People in our community – and across this country – are searching high and low for a silver lining, for a glimmer of hope. They crave the reassurance that there are still places like this one – of hope and possibility. Where good happens every single day! Where dreams come true!

They want to know there are places like our FIU, filled with people like you – who use adversity as motivation. Who truly care and pour their heart and soul into their work. Who have a passion for teaching and student success. Who believe education is a powerful force for good.

For years, we never had a faculty or staff giving campaign. We didn't want to ask because we were afraid to! But, you've shown us that fear was unfounded. You've given and given and given to our FIU, because you're proud of this institution, you're excited for our future.

You've also given because this is a family. And what do families do? They support one another! In difficult times, we've cried together, supported one another. During the joyous times, we've laughed and celebrated together. We've cheered on our friends, co-workers, children, loved ones as they walked across the graduation stage. We've commiserated with one another about finding a parking spot.

We've bragged about our FIU, proudly worn our gear, and put a license plate on our cars. We've pledged our support, because we know that growing our FIU starts with us! We know our work is never done! We will never settle for average.

Since we started Ignite, you've never once hesitated to reach into your own pockets. We have seen faculty and staff participation grow from 34% to 41% to 50%! This is outstanding!

It's because of our belief in your generosity that at last year's breakfast we posed a special challenge: to help us reach our goal of raising \$10 million. Guess what? You answered the call! We went above and beyond – reaching \$11 million! Let's use this momentum to propel us forward!

More than 2,000 of you have answered the call and given to FIU. We can do better! I challenge everyone in this room to give back! Reflect on what makes FIU so special. Ask how you can have a lasting impact on our students and entire community. Invest in FIU's colleges or schools or a particular program or initiative. There are more than 160 projects to support! Remember that no pledge is too small – every gift counts! This year, let's reach 100% participation!

Thank you for all that you have done. Thank you for your continued belief and pride in our FIU. Because of you, people believe in us, and what we do – 24/7, 365. I know I can count on you to keep turning the impossible into the inevitable!

Now, please take a look at this video... It's proof that our faculty and staff are dedicated to making dreams come true and advancing our FIU!