



Address at the 2018 Veterans Day Breakfast

**Given by Mark B. Rosenberg
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Office of the President
FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

*This speech was presented on November 6, 2018 to the attendees of the
2018 Veterans Day Breakfast.*

Good morning and thank you for being here. A very special thank you to our keynote speaker Rodney D. Bullard! We're so honored to have you here today! And thank you to our student speaker Keishla Santiago Ortiz.

Today is election day, and today, we live in freedom. We have the power to vote, and we have democracy because of our veterans.

Because these brave men and women didn't hesitate, they bravely joined the Army, Marines, Navy, Air Force and Coast Guard, they know that freedom is not free. They stepped up and took responsibility. They left behind families, friends and loved ones to protect our families, friends and loved ones. They did this all for us!

Our veterans reflect the goodness, the civility, respect and goodwill, that so many across this country are desperately searching for. I don't have to tell you that these are truly trying times, full of exclusivity and divisiveness, uncertainty and frustration. These times test our capacity for understanding, our capacity for courage, commitment and goodwill.

But our veterans are a beacon of hope! They set an example for all of us with their spirit of humility, civility, leadership and sacrifice. Now more than ever, our veterans deserve our enduring gratitude and appreciation.

Veterans Day is one day, but it should be every day. And that's why at FIU, we make it our mission to honor our veterans every day.

As you may remember, last year, we unveiled our Felsberg Veterans Plaza – which is named after our student, Michael Felsberg. Michael was a patriot who never let go of his sense of duty to his fellow Americans – especially his fellow Panthers. You could always find him on the sidelines at a game.

You name it he was there – soccer, football, softball game – yelling loudly – sometimes at the refs – and cheering on his fellow student-athletes!

Michael was also a loving son and friend. He was a star student, who earned Dean's List status every single semester. He was a proud marine, who served four years and then came to our FIU. And he was a hero, who returned to the Marines after graduating, because he heard a replacement was needed for an officer killed in combat.

Every day, his legacy lives on here at FIU.

Felsberg field at our FIU Softball Stadium bears his name. As does the annual Felsberg Memorial Softball tournament, the Michael Felsberg Scholarship Endowment for track, and even our FIU's Athletic Spirit Award, which we renamed in his honor to the Michael Felsberg Spirit Award.

And, of course, our Felsberg Veterans Plaza – where the likeness of our Michael stands. He – like all of our veterans here today – is a constant reminder to be better, to serve others, and to raise the bar on ourselves. This is what our world needs! This is what our future depends on!

To all of our veterans here today, thank you, again, for your service!