MEMORANDUM

July 22, 2014

Dear FIU Family:

The outstanding work of our students, faculty and staff is generating contagious excitement in our community and our County leaders recognize that FIU is on the cusp of doing even greater things in the areas of access to higher education, job creation, economic development, and research and development.

That is why the Miami-Dade County Commission unanimously directed Mayor Carlos Gimenez and his staff to negotiate with FIU and the Miami-Dade County Fair & Exposition to create a plan for the relocation of the Fair so that FIU can expand onto that 86-acre property, which is owned by the County and leased by the Fair.

We want to thank the County Commissioners, Mayor Gimenez, and his staff for allowing us to move forward.

Our proposed expansion will enhance our ability to create new jobs for the South Florida economy and produce greater student talent in engineering, the sciences, and entrepreneurship - areas that are state priorities and keys to economic development. We also expect to add additional undergraduate and graduate students to meet the demand created by the well documented student achievement success of Miami-Dade County Public Schools.

Our current campus may seem large but we have the smallest main campus among the 10 traditional public universities in Florida’s State University System. We have less than half the campus space as most of these great institutions, yet our enrollment of eligible students continues to grow. We will soon be out of space and we do not want to cap our growth and lose momentum for our community.

This initiative is important for our institution AND our community. FIU’s success is also our community’s success, especially since the vast majority of our student body and graduates are homegrown talent.

You can support this effort by first sharing the following facts with your friends and neighbors:

- FIU is proposing a no-cost-to-the-county relocation of the Fair that still allows all of the Tamiami Park activities, like youth baseball and basketball, to remain.

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• FIU will not raise tuition to cover the cost of this expansion.

• FIU’s growth goes hand in hand with the expansion of jobs and educational opportunities for our community. We expect significant growth in our medical and health programs like our medical city, which will help us address issues of aging, diabetes, and obesity, among others.

• Great cities deserve great public universities, and our community should expect no less. This coming year we will graduate 12,500 students—almost all of which are sons and daughters of this community. We will provide needed financial support to nearly 39,000 students-totaling over $400 million.

• This opportunity is one of a kind. The physical location of the Fair next to the main FIU campus presents Miami Dade County with a unique opportunity to maximize the use of that public space to generate economic development and expand our higher education infrastructure all at the same time.

• The Fair will be provided with an effective alternative that respects the legacy of that annual community event and allows it to continue growing into the future.

Our institution needs each and every one of you to get engaged and active. Here are some things you can do right now:

• We urge you to learn more about this initiative and help me get the word out to friends and neighbors.
• Consider contacting your county commissioner with your appreciation for giving us a chance to show what FIU can do with this land.
• Mark your calendar for the Sept. 3, 2014 commission meeting where this initiative will be discussed. We need the FIU community’s support at that meeting.

If you have questions, please direct them to me at mark.rosenberg@fiu.edu. I will respond timely to make sure that you have a full understanding and share our hopes and aspirations for the future! Our momentum depends on you—you are FI-You!

Sincerely,

Mark B. Rosenberg
President