



Capital Campaign Workshop

**Given by Mark B. Rosenberg
on August 14, 2010**



This speech was presented to attendees of the FIU Foundation's Workshop to discuss the launch of the university's new Capital Campaign on August 14, 2010.

Good morning! Thank you for being here!

In just nine days, thousands of students will stream onto our two campuses with high expectations!

They are pursuing their life's dreams here at FIU. They know that their education can make a critical difference in these uncertain times for them, their families and their future. Their presence at FIU is an expression of their optimism and trust!

We have an obligation and opportunity to get it right, to make a difference that far transcends what we are and who we are.

Walk around here or Biscayne Bay even today and you can feel the excitement mounting! Those of us embedded in this academic enterprise are starting to get a rush, no doubt. I personally am pumped and can't wait for the explosion of humanity on our two campuses!

Our institution is part of a larger fabric of education institutions that extends back to the middle ages. We are one of the oldest institutions still intact from that period. Why? Because we play a transcendent role in advancing civilization!

Close to home, we have emerged in this community as an anchor institution. No matter where you go in South Florida, you are one degree of separation from an FIU graduate! Last night I called President Dennis Gallon at Palm Beach State College and Tabatha McDonald answered the phone. She told me that she had just graduated from FIU!

For FIU to fulfill its obligations to the community, it must enhance its traditional role as educator and at the same time accept its role as a solutions center, the go-to place where community leadership (elected officials, non-profit leaders, small and large businesses) can find solutions to every issue that the 21st century brings.

You see, we are high neutral ground. We have a legacy of being engines of prosperity - the laser, magnetic resonance imaging, the FM radio, DNA fingerprinting, even Viagra all has their originals in research universities.

Closer to home, our post hurricane Andrew research has led to better building codes, stronger construction, and more wind resistant homes. Our Everglades related work has helped to restore that unbelievable eco-system.

But there is more to do!

Great universities in this country have robust endowments precisely to facilitate their roles as educators of students and centers for problem solving.

You shared with me special moments just last year in the installation of our Fifth President. Then, I asked you to have hope, courage, determination and urgency about our FIU and our community. I asked you to transcend yourselves and contribute to something that will continue to have a critical impact on thousands long after we are gone. I asked you then to help me to continue to turn the impossible into the inevitable.

All of these ingredients are even more critical today than yesterday. I have been reading Steven Covey's book, *Everyday Greatness*. In it, he has a wonderful little aphorism, "A ship in harbor is safe – but that is not what ships are for."

It is time for our foundation to get out of the harbor. That is why we are here today!

And let me share with you where we are going and why it is important for the Foundation to step up to the next level. FIU in 2020 – there is so much to do! Here is the visual map of what we do together!

~ *Play Video* ~

Thank you.