



Doral Business Council Signature Breakfast

**Given by Mark B. Rosenberg
on April 14, 2015**



This speech was presented to attendees of the monthly Doral Business Council Signature Breakfast on April 14, 2015.

Good morning!

It's great to be in Doral again sharing great news about FIU! When I spoke to the Doral Business Council last fall I told you about our high goals. We see our university as a solutions center for our community. Our mission is intimately linked to our geography and our demography - indeed our geography and our demography are our destiny. We see ourselves as a force for good! That has been true from the beginning.

You see, 2015 is a very special year for our FIU. It marks the 50th anniversary of the legislature's creation of FIU. The seeds of what would become our university were planted in 1965. That's when Florida Senator Robert M. Haverfield introduced Senate Bill 711. Senate Bill 711 proposed a plan for a state university in Miami. He worked tirelessly to get 24 co-sponsors for his bill. In May 1965, the bill was passed with no dissenting votes. Our founding president was Chuck Perry. His first official statement on August 1, 1969 recognized that there was "no more challenging assignment in higher education than the creation of a specifically urban university which must be equipped to serve the needs of an already large and steadily expanding metropolitan area."

Boy, was he right! For those of you who don't know, FIU is a university that sprung out of the ground on an abandoned airport. FIU only received 340 acres, even while they were giving other public universities (opened during the same period) twice and three times as much land for their main campuses. Our first building - the control tower - had neither running water, electricity, nor furniture. In October 1969 we were victims of a burglary - \$10,000 worth of equipment from the university's humble offices. The wheels and tires were stripped off of four university cars, money was taken, and a large amount of office equipment was stolen. It was a great setback. But we were not deterred. Within the next two years, the first campus building, Primera Casa, was being built.

Every decade since then we have had a cause, an obstacle to overcome: The 60s - to get the university chartered and funded. The 70s - to get the university staffed and opened. The 80s - expand the university, and initiate housing and graduate programs. The 90s - to build a research university. The 2000s - the law school and medical school. And we did it the hard way - "from the ground up"!

Today, we have taken off, and built a university we can be proud of and our neighbors can be proud of. Let me share some of our most recent accomplishments:

Forbes named FIU one of "America's Best Employers." We ranked 64th out of 500 employers. We were first in the education category in Florida and ninth in the nation in the same category. Among the 19 Florida-based employers on the list, we ranked third.

President Obama recently visited our Maidique Campus. He addressed the topic of immigration during a nationally-televised town hall.

U.S. News & World Report placed the College of Business at No. 15 among the top business schools for the International MBA in its 2016 edition of the Best Graduate Schools.

FIU's Graduate Nursing program was ranked No. 54 by the U.S. News & World Report 2016 Best Graduate Schools Guidebook, marking the highest-ever ranking for the 23-year-old master's program.

DesignIntelligence ranked the FIU Department of Interior Architecture among the top 10 interior architecture degree programs in the nation, and first among universities in Florida.

MAST@FIU was recognized as one of the top high schools for STEM education in the U.S, and FIU has joined Booker T. Washington HS in the reopening of their 25-year-old planetarium (the only one of its kind in Miami-Dade).

FIU recently launched the FIU-Miami Creative City Initiative in partnership with the Creative Class Group. This project, which engages political, business and cultural leaders, as well as FIU faculty, students, and alumni, was created to harness creative and entrepreneurial forces that can help accelerate Greater Miami's transformation into a creative economy.

FIU has also partnered with the U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce to promote research, economic development and advocacy.

Nearly 1,300 students from FIU provided managerial and logistical support at the 2015 Food Network and Cooking Channel South Beach Wine & Food Festival presented by FOOD & WINE in February. Preliminary data shows that they made \$4.9 million in sponsorship and corporate revenue and \$5.3 million in ticket sales.

Teams from more than 110 U.S. and Canadian law schools competed at the 2015 American Bar Association's National Negotiation Finals. FIU Law was the only Florida law school to compete in the finals. The FIU team took second place, missing out on the championship title by just ONE point to the University of Manitoba. FIU Law also received a \$620,000 grant – the largest grant amount ever received by our law school - to educate defense lawyers handling capital cases.

For the second year in a row, FIU's Model United Nations team captured the Outstanding Large Delegation award at the Harvard National Model United Nations.

Dr. Marianna Baum, professor at the Robert Stempel College of Public Health and Social Work, was selected by the American Red Cross as the recipient of the Cervera Real Estate Ambassador Award for her work in the field of HIV. Dr. Aileen Marty, a professor at the Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine who has been on the frontlines of the worldwide war against Ebola, was one of 10 outstanding women honored during Miami-Dade County's recent "In the Company of Women" awards. Dr. Marin Gillis, associate professor at the Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine, was appointed to the Board of Directors of the Global Bioethics Initiative (GBI) – an independent, non-profit organization dedicated to improving quality of life in vulnerable populations around the world.

Those are just a few of the Worlds Ahead accomplishments of our students, faculty and staff.

Our university's success is our community's success. And that is true of Doral. Throughout this county, there are so many communities on the move. Doral is on the move – that is good for all of us! As neighbors, FIU and Doral share common goals. Like all of us at FIU, I know everyone in this room is committed to the economic well-being of this community. At FIU, we also are committed to the well-being of our neighbors in Doral.

I know I've shared this with you before, but let me tell you again about FIU's positive impact right here in Doral. Close to 4,000 of our students call Doral home. That's an increase of almost 50 percent since 2009!! 220 high school students who live in Doral participate in dual enrollment at FIU. They are earning college credits before their high school graduation. That's 3 times as many students as just 5 years ago! During the last academic year we awarded almost \$30 million in financial aid and scholarships to Doral residents. That's a 46 percent increase in a five-year period! During the past academic year, we also awarded bachelor's degrees to more than 600 Doral residents; and graduate degrees to more than 200 Doral residents. Approximately 7,000 alumni live in Doral. 59 alumni own businesses in Doral. More than 500 Doral residents work at FIU as faculty and staff. They spend their hard-earned money right here in this city!

It is clear that FIU's success is our neighbors' success. Our success is Doral's success. That's important as FIU looks into our next horizon. The next horizon for us is next door to the Modesto Maidique Campus. In November, 65 percent of almost 500,000 Miami-Dade voters demonstrated their confidence in FIU and our future. Despite what you may have heard, they gave us a mandate to expand to the 64 acres contiguous to our Maidique Campus. We are talking about more and better job and educational opportunities.

We are the country's fourth largest public research institution in terms of enrollment. We enroll more than 54,000 students. By 2020, we project we will have 65,000 students. We graduate nearly 12,500 students annually. In the next ten years, nearly 130,000 students will graduate from FIU. Most will stay here in Miami. Many will choose to live right here in Doral. We refuse to shut the door of opportunity to the young people of our community who have the preparation, drive and determination to pursue higher education.

The expansion will allow us to enhance teaching, research and creative endeavors in areas such as engineering, the sciences and entrepreneurship. Doing so can only increase our standing among the great universities of this nation. This initiative is important for our institution and our community, especially our neighbors in Doral. I hope to have more news for you in the coming months as we continue to work with the county and The Fair on a win-win-win solution for relocating the fair.

FIU is proud to mark 50 years of making an impact on our community. I know I can count on the support of the leaders in this room so that we continue to be a beacon of hope and opportunity for many decades to come.

THANK YOU!