



Dr. Douglas Wartzok Appreciation Reception

**Given by Mark B. Rosenberg
on June 26, 2014**



This speech was presented to the attendees of the Appreciation Reception for outgoing Provost Dr. Douglas Wartzok on June 26, 2014.

Rosalie and I want to thank you for being here today to celebrate our provost, Douglas Wartzok! Doug and Sue Wartzok are two of the most decent people you will ever meet! They exemplify what our Superintendent refers to as “good people.”

We want to thank Doug and Sue for all that they have done to make this university a better, stronger and more moral institution. I personally want to share with you my gratitude to Doug --for the tangible and intangible aspects of his leadership and his being.

This position of provost is the most difficult in the university. It demands among other things:

- Credibility with external stakeholders – including the Board of Governors.
- Credibility with our Board of Trustees... A remarkable array for community minded volunteers who can deeply believe in us in part as a consequence of how they relate to the Provost.
- Credibility with fellow vice presidents... With deans... With faculty... With students...the very lifeblood of our educational enterprise....

To be a great provost, you have to be able to call upon a [tapestry](#) of knowledge, wisdom, skills, and courage. And you must have an authentic voice.

I think about all the provosts that we have had and I have known and worked with all of them. Doug is the best, because he is one of the most credible academicians and decent human beings whom I have known and worked with.

Our Professor has a way of speaking truth. His temperance reinforces the image of an individual, who like so many of you, stands for something greater than himself or herself. An individual who personifies the exemplar of confidence without boorishness; of excellence without overstatement and self-aggrandizement; of conscientiousness without self-absorption; of humility – a precious and rare condition in this age of me firstism and 24/7 selfies! Doug found a way in his incredible sprint as provost to make it look easy – es facil.

But Ladies and Gentlemen--it was not easy – improving the university, raising its profile the right way, through the honest work of our faculty and staff. It was not easy:

- Working with deans and professors and staff to hire over 500 new faculty,
- To raise nearly \$200 m. in donor gifts,
- To Generate nearly \$500 m. in Sponsored research,
- Expanding or planning an additional 5 m sq. feet to our sanctuary.
- Hiring nearly 80 new student success advisers,
- Adding nearly 14,000 additional students...
- Improving the graduation rates--
- To the point of national recognition by one of nation's leading university associations!
- Graduating nearly 50,000 students during this period – 50,000 souls who are better off today because of the experience

That he and you provided for them at our FIU!

And through it all, day after day, week after week, month after month Doug Wartzok provided the leadership necessary to turn our hopes and dreams into realities. He excelled through leading by example. The Wartzok's six figure gift to ensure the presence of the Amernet Quartet and their students. What a strong demonstration of our provost's respect for and commitment what we believe in!

Never before have we had a provost who listened so well. Whose patient can-do manner so ably nurtured the hearts and souls of all of us who believe in the force for good that is our university. Talk about a steady hand, a cool and calm leader who found a way to be there for us all!

We could cite many accomplishments of our provost, but let me give you one that I want you to remember about him. Our provost was a champion for doing right by undocumented students by providing them with in-state waivers. It was our provost, working with staff and many of you, who found a way to step forward courageously to allow this injustice to be righted. And now, not just 100s but thousands of students in our community and throughout the state will be the beneficiaries of this courageous initiative that will change their lives and improve our community and state. What an able captain, what an able leader.

So Doug you have accomplished more than we asked you are leaving your post better than you found it. You have raised the bar higher than we could have imagined when. When we were lucky to hire you and Sue here just a few short years ago. Your presence and your work challenges us to get better, to bring our "A" games every time. Just like you did, have and will.

Today – FIU, our FIU, is a better, stronger and a more just institution than in 2009. Thanks in part to your exemplary leadership. Thanks in part to the decency that you have brought to our community.

Thank you for standing by my side. I could not have asked for a harder-working, more conscientious loyal or determined human being than you. It has been my privilege. Job well done. Mission accomplished.

Doug Wartzok – we are grateful for who you are, what you stand for and for being our leader, our provost! Thanks to you and Sue for being a part of our incredible family!