



Address at FIU's 2010 Employee Holiday Celebration

**Given by Provost Douglas Wartzok
on Behalf of Mark B. Rosenberg**

on December 8, 2010



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Happy Holidays! It is a pleasure to be here with you celebrating another year of working together to do what FIU does best – turning the impossible into the inevitable!

We have had so many examples over the past year –Who could have imagined a year ago that our FIU athletic teams would have captured not one, but two Sun Belt conference championships? Our baseball and football teams had incredible seasons this year, including Garrett Wittels' record-breaking hitting streak and now our first bowl game ever. We have accomplished these incredible feats thanks to the hard work of our athletes and coaches, of course, but the support of the entire FIU family, including the faculty and staff in this room, is what allowed our student athletes to turn the impossible into the inevitable.

We have made tremendous strides in engaging our community. We have formed and strengthened strategic partnerships with the public school system, health care organizations, and other key businesses and organizations in our community. Our faculty, staff and administrators are lending their expertise to projects that promise to transform our community in crucial areas such as education, transportation and health care.

And our students are engaged in these projects as well, gaining real life experience that will give them the tools they need to compete in the 21st century global marketplace. We have come together as an institution to map out our vision for the next five years, through our strategic plan.

We have identified four strategic themes – arts, environment, global and health – which will be the foundation for teaching, research and engagement in the next five years. And I know every faculty and staff member at FIU will do their part to implement this vision. In the months to come, I will be calling on all of you to make a strong statement in support of our crucial fundraising efforts and capital campaign. To reach the next level, FIU needs the community to believe in FIU's vision and to donate money to our institution to make sure we can continue to educate engaged global citizens for decades to come.

If our faculty and staff unite as well to show how much they love this great institution by donating through a faculty and staff campaign, we will send a strong message to our community that we are proud of FIU, that we believe in FIU, and the rest of our community should be proud of us and believe in us as well. We are closer than ever to realizing our destiny as a leading, student-centered, urban research university that is locally and globally engaged – thanks to our incredible faculty and staff. All of you

are truly Worlds Ahead. I feel blessed to lead this institution and look forward to working with all of you in the year to come to continue turning the impossible into the inevitable.