



Freshman Convocation 2012

**Given by Mark B. Rosenberg
on August 19, 2012**



*This speech was presented to Freshman Convocation 2012
on August 19, 2012*

Who are we? Welcome to FIU. Welcome new students, returning students, Parents and family members of our freshman! We are now your university too! We have been waiting for this day. We believe that FIU is an amazing place. For us, every student counts! Class of 2016, tomorrow- you begin a major phase in your life: One of learning, discovery, self-awareness.

You are now a part of the FIU Family. Panthers! Blue and Gold! A part of our institutional traditions, new and old ones alike; such as those created by Belinda Gunn, the author of our new Alma Mater. We are prepared for you and we want each and every one of you to succeed. TO SUCCEED!!

To understand our Worlds Ahead approach I want to tell you who we are! We are a university that has sprung out of the ground nearly fifty years ago on an abandoned airport. We are a university that has faculty and staff who were, and are: visionary, forward-thinking, and committed to a globally competitive higher education for you. A faculty and staff who were not deterred when they discovered that their first building, the control tower that you can find near the Towers Resident Halls, had neither running water, electricity, nor furniture. A hard-working group of students who demanded quality, who wanted to attend a public university, in Miami, so that they did not have to leave their community. We are a university that overcame so many obstacles to be here today: a university that has continually learned to turn the impossible into the inevitable. We were told that we could not enroll freshman; we were told that we could never offer masters and doctoral degrees; we were told that only certain universities in the state could offer law and medicine, and we could not. Many

of you, I know now, see us as an option for medical school, law school or countless other professional degrees! We were told that no, we would never have resident halls; we were told that we could not have intercollegiate sports; we were told that we would never have a football team that was only for the UFs, FSUs, and UCFs.

That was then. Today, we have all this and more, we have you, our most amazing class ever! We are a university with a world's ahead attitude; Forward thinking; International; Entrepreneurial; Centrally-located Family and community-centered; Committed to timely graduation.

Who are we? FIU! Who are we? FIU! Who are we? FIU! Welcome to FIU, your Worlds Ahead education! Are you in?