



The Next Horizon

**Given by Mark B. Rosenberg
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“Greater Miami – we got your back!”

Thank Chamber for its Commitment to FIU! The first public presentation on FIU regarding our first comprehensive master plan was on September 24, 1970 at the Four Ambassadors Hotel. So here we stand almost to the day - 43 years later. There is a fascinating quote from that era – It bears on our challenges as we look ahead: From *Beyond the Tower: The history of Florida International University* by Tom Riley

Here was Chuck Perry and Don McDowell, according to the book’s author: more or less during their first week on the campus. What lay before them was everything but a university; the rusty frame of an airplane, weed covered runways, dilapidated airplane hangars, and an airport control tower that was badly peeling, abandoned and filthy. When McDowell wondered how they could possibly transform the control tower into a university site, Perry responded: “This tower will be the site of our first offices. This is where the university will have its beginnings” Indeed they produced a plan that was nationally recognized: according to the president of the American College Testing program, “the plan was a truly superb job of planning the total program.... That was then.

I believe that the university has more than delivered: 200,000 graduates. Today, FIU has over 52,500 students enrolled for the Fall Semester. FIU has:

- Largest majority minority university in country
- Largest producer of minority baccalaureate degrees in the country.
- 25% of Miami Dade County Teachers are FIU graduates
- National Leader in production of STEM degrees for Minorities
- We award more than \$140 million dollars each year in scholarships.
- We spend more than \$85 million dollars each year on goods and services from local businesses.
- We are one of the top 100 universities under 50 years old

Today, FIU is a significant force for good in this community. Throughout the country there is despair about Federal gridlock and inaction. As a Brookings study points out, the reality is that cities and metros are now positioning themselves at the cutting edge of reform, investment and innovation. (*Bruce Katz and Jennifer Bradley, The Metropolitan Revolution: how Cities and Metros are Fixing our Broken Politics and Fragile Economy* 2013)

Today, FIU is a significant force for good in this community: education, innovation, talent development, problem solving, healer, social worker, job creating – that’s who we are and more! Look no further than several of our recent graduates: Mike Tomas, Richard M. Smith, Sky Choi, Trine Engebretsen, and the Tschir Sisters. But it’s not just through our 14,000 classes annually! As an urban public university, committed to our community, we are willing to take responsibility for the challenges of our community. We will not go into a fetal position and wait for the sky to fall; we are committed to making things happen. And we are committed to using our research and creative energies to leave our community better than we found it. Let me give a few examples:

We believe in win-win partnerships that improve our community and enhance business well-being. Many of you know about the groundbreaking partnership we have forged with Miami-Dade County Public Schools thanks to the leadership and vision of Superintendent Carvalho. This partnership is known as ACCESS. That stands for Achieving Community Collaboration in Education and Student Success. Through this achievement-oriented partnership, we have leveraged the know-how of our faculty to enhance K-12 education right here in South Florida! Since Fall 2009 when the great recession was at its peak, we did not shrink as we were told to do; we engaged!

Dual enrollment is a great example. Then there were only 425 Miami Dade County high school students in this acceleration and cost savings program. We expanded from this 425 students to almost 6,000 students today (+\$3,600,000 in savings). Back in 2009, we offered 16 dual enrollment courses. Today we offer 127. In Fall 2009, when so many said that public education was dead, students from only six public schools participated. Today 38 of our public high schools in Miami have dual enrollment programs with FIU! But we did not stop there.

Through ACCESS we have established the Education Effect at Miami Northwestern Senior High. This is a partnership between FIU, Miami Dade County Public Schools and JPMorgan Chase. Through this partnership, we are creating a college-going culture at Northwestern. Let me share with you some of the successes of the Education Effect. Northwestern had historically received grades of D’s and F’s, under the school accountability grading system. With our support, Miami Northwestern is now a “B” school. Since we launched the Education Effect, the percentage of students earning a 3.0 GPA or higher went from 15 percent to 45 percent. The graduation rate increased from 64 percent to 83 percent. The number of students who continue their education past high school has grown by 10 percent. We have empowered 150 students with financial literacy skills. We tripled the number of dual enrollment courses available to Northwestern students and quadrupled the number of students participating. Our work in Liberty City, home to Northwestern, goes beyond the school. We have also created a network of more than 40 community partners in Liberty City to address school and community needs. By working with our partners, Miami-Dade County Public Schools and JPMorgan Chase, we are bringing hope to Liberty City, one young person at a time.

In August, the school system opened MAST@FIU on our Biscayne Bay Campus in North Miami. This is the only four-year high school on a university campus in the State University System. MAST@FIU builds on the successful Maritime and Science Technology magnet school model that we all know on Key Biscayne. And it takes it a step further since our world class marine sciences faculty will play a role in the education of these students. We have also focused on win-win partnerships with business and industry. Take our partnership with FPL. FIU is their largest cohort of university graduates, but they wanted more. So we put our heads together. Today, we have an FPL Customer Care Center right on campus - one of only four in the state. All 38 from the first cohort were offered full-time jobs upon graduating! Take our partnership with Ultimate Software. 58 of our graduates are full time employees there, a total of 44 student interns, 10 of which are presently interns.

How about our partnership with Baptist West hospital? Dozens of medical students rotate each year there in Medicine, Surgery, Anesthesia, Pulmonary Medicine, and Emergency Medicine. But we are not resting! There is much to do. We look forward to our Next Horizon! What does the Next Horizon look like? It is in the depths of the ocean. Here's something you might have seen on the TODAY or in The Miami Herald last week or on CBS Morning News yesterday: Last month we inaugurated the Aquarius Reef Base in the Florida Keys, the world's only undersea research laboratory. Aquarius allows scientists to live, work and train 63 feet under the sea for weeks at a time. With help from our congressional delegation, partners in the federal government and private donors, we were able to put Aquarius back to work for the benefit of the global community. FIU's Aquarius has already hosted a special NASA mission and there are many more exciting missions in our future! The Next Horizon is groundbreaking, problem-solving research. The U.S. Department of Transportation recently announced that FIU's Civil and Environmental Engineering Department will be home to one of 20 Tier One University Transportation Centers. Our researchers will be working on accelerated bridge construction. More than 70,000 bridges need to be replaced or retrofitted in our country. That makes advanced bridge construction crucial to making our nation's roads safer. The Next Horizon is building bridges to our neighbors. That's what we're doing, literally, at our Modesto Maidique Campus, to bring us closer to our neighbors in Sweetwater. We're proud to be a part of the public-private collaboration known as UniversityCity. This is a pioneering project. It's funded by an \$11.4 million-dollar grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation known as the TIGER grant - Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery Program. These funds will help us and our partners connect our Maidique Campus to our neighbors in Sweetwater and to other parts of Greater Miami. The Next Horizon is a new generation of healers in our Academic Health Center. Senior faculty in Nursing have just completed major research for American Academy of Pediatrics - on parent health following sudden infant or child death. Researchers associated with our medical and engineering schools have developed a method to deliver life-saving medications across the blood brain barrier using nanotechnology in patients with AIDS. Our

medical school is also developing new medications for heart failure that will soon be in clinical trials.

Ladies and Gentlemen: Our Academic Health Center now employs about 700; If conditions permit, we will add at least another 1,000 health and medical specialists to our faculty and staff in 15 years – probably less. And last week, we took another step in the right direction with a milestone gift to our university. Dr. Herbert and Nicole Wertheim made a \$10 million-dollar gift to name our College of Nursing and Health Sciences. FIU is now the only university with his and hers health colleges! We have the Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine and the Nicole Wertheim College of Nursing and Health Sciences. Thanks to the generosity of the Wertheims we will educate thousands of health care professionals, who will work together to heal our community. To continue contributing to our community we must grow. You see, sometime in the next five to seven years, we will likely be out of space on the Maidique Campus. The rusty frame of an airplane, weed covered runways, dilapidated airplane hangars, they are all gone. In their stead, a field of dreams for our community has risen like a Phoenix to be a thriving public engaged Research University that is at one with our very complex community. And that takes me back to where we began! There are 12 universities in the SUS; our FIU has the least amount of land on the main Campus of any of the first ten, not counting Polytech and New College. How did this happen? So here is the major public university in the largest population center of the state with the least space. The university's promise and hope for our future could be short-circuited because of a lack of vision and courage to see what could be done and to take action! What do we do? Well, we are already rapidly expanding our footprint at our Biscayne Bay Campus. We have opened sites on Brickell, South Beach, West Broward, and China; so it is inevitable that we cast our glance to the South where our friends at the Youth Fair occupy 86 acres.

We are seeking a win-win swap so that we can put those 86 acres to a better public purpose! When we expand to that land, it will bring an estimated \$900 million dollars in construction, with an impact of \$1.8 billion dollars. In the long term, we'll create thousands of jobs and nurture entrepreneurship. The annual recurring economic impact of the expansion is estimated at \$541 million dollars. What will we do with that land? We'll expand our Academic Health Center and medical research and development to reach the destiny envisioned by my predecessor Mitch Maidique and the state legislature when it authorized the medical school. We'll build partnership space to promote the academic and research mission of the university. We are anxious to start a business incubator in West Dade. The time has come! We'll focus on community economic development, entrepreneurship and commercialization of scientific and research findings. In short, expanding next door will allow for the continued accelerated development of a medical city in western Miami-Dade County. Our enterprise is good business; it will create high paying jobs and elevate our tax base.

We have been working on this expansion since the fall of 2010. That's when FIU, Miami-Dade County and The Fair established a task force to help identify a new location for The Fair. On October 22nd a resolution will come before the County Commission that states that The Fair and the County jointly support FIU's efforts to seek state funds for this expansion. We're not asking the county for a direct appropriation. We just need the go-ahead from our County Commissioners.

So you see there is still much to do! We can turn the impossible into the inevitable. The better our community gets, the better FIU! There is no doubt that the same can be restated: The better FIU gets, the better our community will be; so that the younger generation can get the state of the art education they need. Greater Miami – FIU has got your back! We know that you will have ours, as we seek legislative support to help us get to the next horizon!