



Address at the 2018 Parent and Family Day

**Given by Mark B. Rosenberg
on September 15, 2018**



*This speech was presented on September 15, 2018 to the attendees of
Parent and Family Day 2018.*

Good afternoon! We hope you have a great time visiting our campus today – and that you will join us for the big game later today!

Parents, family and loved ones, I want to ask you something: how many of you were once students here yourselves?

Welcome home!

We're so proud that your family has chosen us for this very special journey that you are on! We're so happy and proud you can be here at FIU – at a university that is a powerful force for good that's committed to impact! A university that steps up and takes responsibility 24/7, 365, and that never slows down and never stops!

Every day, we use the blessings of our talent in research, teaching and helping others to move our students and our community forward – and help make the world a better place!

You're a part of this – and so much more. Be proud to be a part of this Panther family! After all, we have a lot to proud of!

Your FIU was recently ranked second in the state in performance by the Florida Board of Governors. We're going to continue making sure you – our students – graduate on time, in four years and go on to good jobs! We're going to get to number one!

Today, your FIU also has 18 programs in the Top 100 in the U.S. News & World Report Best College rankings + Top 100 Public Universities. From business to law, nursing, social work, engineering, education, Criminal Justice and more – our programs are truly the best of the best! Not only that but just this past Monday, we learned that FIU was ranked as one of the top 100 public universities overall.

Your FIU is a top research university. Two percent of universities in the U.S. have earned Carnegie R1 classification for highest research activity. Your FIU is one of those universities! We truly are a solutions center for our community – and beyond!

FIU graduates are top earners! In the State University System, FIU graduates are the most likely to find employment within the first year of graduating. And their average salary ranks among the top in the state!

Your FIU has the best students in the 305 – and beyond. This fall, we welcomed the best incoming freshman class in FIU history! Make no mistake: there is no greater educational journey that you could take than here at FIU.

We're here to help our students to develop amazing powers of invention, resilience, character, and confidence, so that they can make a difference in our rapidly-changing world! And today, this is what I want to talk to you about.

As you know, we live in a time of great change – a time full of uncertainty. The pace of change has never been faster. This is the fourth industrial revolution. This is a digital age – driven by computers, software, algorithms, and artificial intelligence that's getting more and *more* intelligent.

The Internet of Things, automation, virtual reality, augmented reality. There is a lot going on out there! Technology is transforming society and revolutionizing everything – how we communicate, work and play. It's also raising the educational bar.

A good education has – and always will be – a powerful force for good in our world. A good education is empowering. A good education allows us to discover new perspectives, compromise, and common ground. A good education sparks innovation and new ideas.

An education for the 21st century means focusing on this new rise of new, emerging technology – and focusing on how it works. It also means focusing on what technology cannot do.

That means harnessing and empowering our unique and inherent human strengths of creativity, innovation and invention to leave our world a better place than we found it.

Now more than ever, we need to harness these human powers for good! After all, our work is not done! The 21st century presents several unique challenges: the future of energy, sea level rise, natural disasters, cybersecurity challenges... the list goes on!

Education must adapt and stay ahead of the change to prepare students to live and work in a world filled with big data and an endless stream of information. The world will not wait for you! In order to be – and remain – successful you must never stop learning! We have always educated lifelong learners – and many of them have crossed our commencement stage.

Like Tomas Suarez Jr. and his daughter, Yanelle, who recently graduated together! They caught my attention when Yanelle leaned in for the obligatory graduation photo on stage. She then asked for a photo with a man behind her. I asked, "What's up?" I wasn't sure who he was! Then she proudly said, "He's my dad. He's graduating, too." I will never forget this moment! Two generations graduating side by side! Moments like these confirm and validate our work – and all that is good about our FIU!

We help families be lifelong learners! We're here to help you – parents and families included – get another degree, certificate and competency! Now more than ever, we're committed to moving from a more traditional institution of higher education to a more 21st century lifelong learner institution of higher education!

There's no doubt that at FIU, you're going to get the experiential, hands-on and interdisciplinary education you'll need to succeed in the 21st century workforce.

Panther parents, family and loved ones – please know your children are in good hands! Before you leave here today, I would like to ask you for four things:

- (1) Keep up with what's happening at FIU! We know sometimes that it can be difficult to find out what's going on in your child's life. We have a solution: The Parent and Family Newsletter. This is your inside scoop on all that's happening here at our FIU! You won't want to miss out! Sign up at go.fiu.edu/parentnews
- (2) Tell the story of the great education your children are earning here at FIU!
- (3) Support FIU! Show your Panther pride! Buy an FIU t-shirt! Buy an FIU license plate! Come back to campus! Catch an exhibit, a lecture, a game! We want you back here next month for Homecoming! Homecoming Week starts Saturday, October 6 and runs through Saturday, October 13. That night we take on Middle Tennessee for our big Homecoming game!

Throughout the week, there will be rallies, parades, concerts and more. Trust me: You're not going to want to miss a minute!

- (4) And can you guess the last one? Never stop learning! Come back for another degree, certificate or competency! We're here for you!

Thank you all for being here! Remember: Have pride, work hard and you will succeed! I look forward to seeing you around campus!