



Address at the Medley Chamber of Commerce Luncheon

**Given by Mark B. Rosenberg
on March 25, 2016**



This speech was presented to the attendees of the Town of Medley Chamber of Commerce Luncheon held at the Turf Club: Banquet Room on March 25, 2016.

Good morning! It's great to be in Medley sharing great news about FIU!

We see our university as a solutions center for the community. Our mission is intimately linked to our geography and our demography - indeed our geography and our demography are our destiny. We understand that we are a beacon of hope and opportunity for this community. We see ourselves as a force for good! Let me tell you how we're having a positive impact right here in Medley and the nearby area.

During the 2014-15 academic year, 1,701 of our students called this area home. That's an increase of 50 percent since 2009. During the 2014-15 academic year we awarded \$11.6 million in financial aid and scholarships to area residents. That's an 83 percent increase since 2009! During the 2014-15 academic year we awarded bachelor's degrees to 310 residents of this area and graduate degrees to 93 residents.

In 2013-14, more than 3,000 FIU alumni lived in this area. We know of 10 businesses in Medley owned by FIU alumni. And we know of 555 alumni who work for Medley businesses. We have more than 100 area residents who work at FIU as faculty and staff. They spend their hard-earned money right here!

As a university, we've spent more than \$49 million over the past five years on goods and services from more than 15 Medley businesses. But we also understand that we must prepare our students to make a good life. That the life of the mind is also about aesthetics, ethics, civic engagement and social responsibility.

As an anchor institution, we are willing to take responsibility for our community. We are committed to providing access to higher education and to provide high quality educational opportunity to all young people in our community who have the preparation, drive and determination to pursue a university degree.

There are 45 high schools in Miami Dade County; we want graduates from each of these schools. We cannot turn our backs on some students because of the accident of birth in zip codes that have low income populations.

So what does FIU look like today in terms of students?

We enroll more than 54,000 students. We are adding 2,000 students a year. By 2020, we project we will have 65,000 students. We predict 2,044 of those students will be from

Medley and the surrounding area. We are the country's fourth largest public research institution in terms of enrollment.

We are the country's largest majority-minority university. We are the shape of things to come for public universities in the U.S. We graduate nearly 12,500 students annually. In the next ten years, nearly 130,000 students will graduate from FIU. Most will stay here in Miami.

Our graduates are the best paid in the State University System. Most of our students who graduate with bachelor's degrees find jobs or enroll in graduate school, within a year of graduation. We award more bachelor's degrees to minorities than any other university in the country. We distribute more than \$470 million dollars each year in scholarships and financial aid.

FIU also creates jobs. With more than 11,000 faculty and staff, we are one of the top 10 employers in Miami-Dade County. We have created 1,000 new, high-paying jobs in the last five years – including over 500 new faculty members. The average annual salary for our new 9-month faculty is \$68,598.92 (\$72,312.92 average for 12-month faculty).

The average salary for our new Administrative employees is \$54,533.96 (\$32,856.40 for new staff members). Our new professors at the Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine average \$151,504.06 a year. 35 percent of Miami-Dade County public school teachers are FIU graduates. 37 percent of Miami-Dade County public school administrators are FIU graduates. All of these are people who live and work and spend right here in South Florida, adding to our prosperity.

Those are just some of the ways FIU is having a positive impact on our community and our workforce.

As members of the Medley Chamber of Commerce, you are committed to the economic well-being of this community. At FIU, we also are committed to the well-being of our neighbors in Medley. Our university's success is our community's success. And that is true of Medley. That's important as FIU looks to our next horizon.

The next horizon for us is next door to the Modesto Maidique Campus. In November, 65 percent of almost 500,000 Miami-Dade voters demonstrated their confidence in FIU and our future. That included 72 percent of the people of Medley!

Despite what you may have heard, they gave us a mandate to expand to the 64 acres contiguous to our Maidique Campus. We are talking about more and better job and educational opportunities: The expansion will allow us to enhance teaching, research and creative endeavors in areas such as engineering, the sciences and entrepreneurship.

Doing so can only increase our standing among the great universities of this nation. South Dade is important in our expansion plans. We have reviewed 30 different sites for the relocation of the Fair. Of all of them, South Dade is the most feasible site.

We presented a proposal to County leaders outlining a win-win partnership. We also have discussed our plans with our neighbors in Homestead, Cutler Bay, Florida City, Sweetwater and Doral. The commissions and councils of these municipalities have unanimously passed resolutions supporting our efforts.

We see the Fair's relocation as a significant economic development initiative for our community. It is an initiative that aligns with the Fair's traditional roles and with the key drivers of South Dade – agriculture and tourism.

In addition to the traditional activities of the Fair, we see a new world of related initiatives that will create a 365-day Fair, and fuel a jobs creation initiative attuned to the opportunities of the 21st century. This is good for South Dade and the entire community. This win-win partnership focuses on three agriculture and food science initiatives.

These are some of the highlights: (1) Agribusiness Incubator (Biotechnology/technology production facility and Food Venture Center) (2) Farm to Fork (Agritourism, Agrifestival, FIU Kitchen Lab, Pop-up Restaurants, Miami-Dade County Farm to Fork Festival) (3) Education (Agroecology program, Agritourism certificate program).

This expansion initiative is important for our institution and our community. I hope to have more news for you in the coming months as we continue to work with the county and The Fair on a win-win-win solution for relocating the fair.

FIU is proud to mark 50 years of making an impact on our community. I know I can count on the support of the leaders in this room so that we continue to be a beacon of hope and opportunity for many decades to come.

Let me share some of our recent accomplishments:

FIU is now in the highest tier of research universities – R1: Doctoral Universities – Highest Research Activity, in the newest edition of the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education.

Washington Monthly ranked us among the top universities in the country - 17th out of 279 higher education institutions. Forbes Magazine ranked us 34th among "America's Best Employers." SECOND in the state!

FIU has joined the 33-member Ashoka U Changemaker Campus consortium, a group of the nation's top colleges and universities who have committed themselves to embedding social entrepreneurship at their core. We were also recognized for innovation in preparing our students for living and working in an increasingly diverse world.

The Institute of International Education is honoring us with its 2016 Andrew Heiskell Award for Internationalizing the Campus. We received this award because of our game-changing Global Learning for Global Citizenship initiative. In late November we held Startup Weekend Miami at FIU at our Tech Station. It was designed to enable developers, designers and entrepreneurs to create, pitch and launch their startup ideas over an intense, 54-hour weekend.

More than 200 people attended the three-day event – including developers, designers, coders, investors and entrepreneurs from around the U.S, making it one of the largest Startup Weekends ever held in Miami. A total of 88 participants competed in 17 teams, pitching their ideas to a panel of judges and investors on Sunday evening. Our efforts did not end there.

We have now launched StartUP FIU. Its core mission is to foster a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship at FIU and beyond. It will be a resource for students, faculty, alumni and community members who are passionate about bringing their ideas to market or are interested in mentoring or assisting startups get to the next level.

In December, we celebrated Fall commencement with more than 4,600 graduates – a fall record! We're expecting to break records again this spring, when we host 10 graduation ceremonies over four days!

Our faculty and students are engaged in groundbreaking research:

We have an \$8 million NSF grant, in partnership with the University of Florida, to become a national hub for research into making homes and businesses safer in hurricanes and tornadoes.

The National Institutes of Health granted our researchers \$12.7 million for a multi-year national landmark study on substance use and adolescent brain development. This is the single largest NIH award ever received by FIU faculty. The College of Engineering and Computing is leading the way in cybersecurity research.

Our faculty's work addresses issues such as protecting the U.S. power grid from attacks, as well as thwarting cybercrime, and the use of social networks to conduct criminal and terrorist activities. We are tackling sea level rise in a multidisciplinary way, through our Sea Level Solutions Center.

We've all heard about the lead exposure crisis in Michigan. Well, we recently welcomed Tomás Guilarte as the new dean of the Robert Stempel College of Public Health & Social Work. Dr. Guilarte has gained worldwide recognition for his research into the devastating effects of environmental lead exposure, especially for children.

His efforts recently earned a \$2.9 million grant from the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences. Our Aerospace Engineering Club at FIU just earned 3rd place in the 2016 SAE East Design Competition sponsored by Lockheed Martin.

We beat teams from all over the world - including renowned U.S. aerospace engineering programs such as University of Michigan, Rutgers, Embry-Riddle, and Texas A&M. And just last month, the team won first and second place at the Boeing Titusville's Bottle Rocket Contest. Those are just a few of the Worlds Ahead accomplishments of our students, faculty and staff.

We understand that we have a sacred obligation to prepare our students to make a good living - to either take a great job or to create a great job. The consensus in our community is that world class cities deserve world class universities.

You can help us build a world class university!