

MEMORANDUM

March 18, 2012

Dear members of the FIU community:

Welcome back to the last weeks of this spring semester!

As I was walking through our FIU bookstore this past Tuesday, March 13, 2012, I was surrounded by a small flash mob of three hopeful people: a mother, father, and daughter. The father proudly announced in determined but halting English that his wife had graduated from FIU in 1979, and that his only child, the anxious daughter standing in front of me, had just been admitted to our FIU. Without pausing, he then urged me to ensure that she be admitted to our medical school as well because the entire family wanted her to be a physician and of course practice here at home. I quickly clarified the multistep process that would be necessary for this to happen including successful completion of a rigorous academic curriculum and competing with the best students from across the country for one of the 120 openings in the 2016 entering medical school class. I assured the father that we had his daughter's "back" and would do our best to ensure that she get the quality education that she deserves. Satisfied with this, they went back to purchasing some snappy new FIU T-shirts that had just arrived, and I continued to the book review event that we were hosting in the upstairs coffee shop of the bookstore.

These next few weeks will be important ones for FIU. Soon we will be coming together as a university community to discuss the 2012-13 budget, which as you know, contains a \$24.3 million cut to our operating budget.

You are invited to our Budget Town Hall meeting at 9 a.m. Thursday, March 29 in the MARC Pavilion at the Modesto A. Maidique Campus. Details regarding a simulcast to Biscayne Bay Campus will be announced soon. Our intent is to discuss these latest budget dynamics and some options for the next two academic years.

We are pleased to inform you that we did get full funding for the Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine. This funding is central to our success in securing full accreditation in 2013, so we are thankful to our state legislators for this allocation.

Next month we will be graduating approximately 4,500 students with bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees. Congratulations to all our graduates and their families on this important accomplishment!

In the midst of these budget and graduation developments, we are pleased that so many of our students (160) participated in Alternative Break – going to 18 sites to provide community service in needy communities. Special thanks to Beverly Dalrymple

and Patricia Tomino Lopez-Guerrero in the Office of Leadership and Service for making these incredible programs available to our hard-working students.

We continue to move forward in construction, as we have now “broken ground” for our new residential hall and parking garage just west of Panther Hall, and have nearly topped off our new graduate science facility to the south of PG 5.

Next month we will recognize approximately 200 faculty who have authored books between 2008 and 2011. We are delighted that our university bookstore has agreed to designate an area where our “faculty authors” will be featured.

I want to also take this opportunity to update you on our accomplishments since January:

- [The South Beach Food and Wine Festival](#) was a great success, with nearly 1,100 FIU students working alongside some of the world’s top chefs and bringing about \$2 million for our Chaplin School of Hospitality and Tourism Management and the Southern Wine Spirits Beverage Management Center. Funds from the festival provide scholarships, faculty development and help the school provide state-of-the-art equipment to our students. More importantly, the festival gives our students opportunities that often lead to good jobs in the hospitality industry and reminds the nation that FIU is at the forefront this vital sector of our economy.
- [The 8th annual Relay for Life](#), held in early March, raised \$90,000 for the American Cancer Society. Earlier in the semester, [Dance Marathon](#) raised \$60,000 for the Miami Children’s Hospital Foundation. I am proud to see that, even in these difficult economic times, Panthers still rise to the challenge and donate their time and money to causes important to our community.
- [The Geopolitical Summit](#), held in February, brought one of the nation’s most influential columnists and thinkers to FIU. Thomas Friedman, a three-time Pulitzer Prize winner and columnist for The New York Times, spoke before more than 600 members of our community on the role of the U.S. in the world of the 21st Century. We are so pleased that our Model United Nations students were able to meet with Mr. Friedman privately for a candid exchange of views about his latest book.
- We are proud of our own faculty – including 124 new faculty members – who are working hard not only to teach our students but also to solve urgent problems in their fields. Take, for example, FIU physician and disaster expert Dr. [Juan Pablo Sarmiento](#), who co-authored a study for the World Health Organization that examines the humanitarian response in the first three months following the 2010 Haiti earthquake.
- [The 11th annual Torch Awards](#) recognized the university’s most outstanding alumni and members of the FIU faculty for contributions to their fields, the

community and their alma mater. Among those we honored was the late U.S. Marine Corps 2nd Lt. Michael Felsberg, an FIU cross country, track & field standout who was killed in Iraq in 2004. He deserved not only this posthumous award for his heroism, but the gratitude of a nation. On behalf of all of us at FIU, I want again thank his parents, Paul and Arlene, who have worked with the Alumni Association on a scholarship endowment for track & field student-athletes.

- The exhibition game against the Miami Marlins earlier this month should fill all of us with pride in being Panthers. It was the first baseball game in FIU history against a Major League Baseball team and the second game ever played by the Marlins in the sport's newest and most sophisticated stadium. The more than 18,000 fans who came out to see some baseball and admire our community's latest accomplishment were reminded of how much our FIU has grown. Congratulations to our players and coaching staff!
- Our women's basketball advanced to the second-round Women's National Invitation Tournament after defeating Stetson 75-47 Thursday night at U.S. Century Bank Arena. On Saturday night, they lost 77-61 to the University of South Florida in Tampa.

Thank you so much for all the hard work you put in and outside the classroom to make our FIU a Worlds Ahead institution. We offer hope to so many who count on us every day to provide the education that will create opportunities and open doors. Were it not the case, I would not have had the singular privilege in the bookstore last week to assure the anxious family that we would do right by their soon-to-be-enrolled child and so many others who are enrolled at FIU!

Go Panthers!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark B. Rosenberg', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mark B. Rosenberg
President