MEMORANDUM

August 25, 2014

Dear FIU Family,

Welcome back to campus!

To our new freshmen and transfer students, welcome to our Panther family! To our returning students, faculty and staff, have a great start to this academic year! This year we have 7,100 freshmen and transfer students and 154 new faculty members. If you see them around campus, please make sure we make them feel at home.

We know you are proud to be a part of a university that in five short decades has transformed into a beacon of hope for our community. We are a university with a soul. We take responsibility for addressing the most crucial issues we face in our community and beyond. We turn the impossible into the inevitable.

That is not all!

Thanks to your outstanding work, our students, faculty, and staff, our FIU is on the cusp of doing even greater things in the areas of access to higher education, job creation, economic development, and research and development.

This academic year will allow us to look toward the next horizon and expand our footprint in the South Florida community. This is why we have proposed an expansion onto the 86-acre property next to the Modesto A. Maidique Campus.

Our expansion will enhance our ability to create new jobs for the South Florida economy and produce greater student talent in engineering, the sciences, and entrepreneurship – areas that are state priorities and key to economic development. We also expect to add additional undergraduate and graduate students to meet the demand created by the well-documented student achievement success of Miami-Dade County Public Schools.

We need YOUR support! Please visit expand.fiu.edu to learn more about this initiative and what it means for the FIU community.
As we have previously communicated to you, we are in a new era where there is an intensified focus on accountability and performance funding. Our state legislators have adopted a performance funding model. That means that beginning this academic year, 2014-15, FIU and other State University System institutions will be funded based on how they perform on 10 performance metrics that include how many of our students graduate in a timely manner, how many STEM graduates we prepare, how many of our graduates are employed, and how much our graduates earn, among other criteria.

To be competitive in this state, and to do right by our students, we are committed now more than ever to building a strong culture of student success here at FIU.

Under this new model, FIU received $18.2 million in new funding for 2014-15, based on our top three ranking in the SUS in achieving performance goals. Of that amount, $5.2 million is being used for new advisors for students, library resources, and the math mastery program, among other important areas. The remaining $13 million will be used for critical investment improvements.

I ask that you join me in thanking Governor Rick Scott and our legislators, particularly our Miami-Dade delegation, for their continued support of FIU, our students, and higher education.

Now let me bring you up to speed on some FIU research and other great things that have been happening at FIU:

• This past May, FIU partnered with the Technology Foundation of the Americas to host eMerge Americas Techweek. During the conference, FIU showcased our Worlds Ahead research. Please take some time to view videos from the event.
• Dr. Aileen Marty, who teaches at the FIU Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine, was recruited by the World Health Organization to serve with the Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network in their fight against the Ebola outbreak in West Africa. Dr. Marty is doing incredible, selfless work and it is a testament to the expertise of our faculty. We are proud that she is part of the FIU family. We wish her well and look forward to seeing her back here, safe at home, soon. To learn more about her journey, click here.
• Fabien Cousteau and a team of researchers completed the longest mission in the history of FIU’s Aquarius Reef Base, the world’s only undersea research lab. Find out more about Mission 31 and their work by clicking here. Stay tuned for more exciting news out of Aquarius!
• This summer, 25 African scholars called FIU home as part of President Obama’s Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders. During their visit, the YALI scholars received leadership training that will help them in their work back home. Learn more here.
• FIU researcher and psychologist Eliza L. Nelson found that infants who exhibit a consistent right hand preference are more likely to develop advanced language skills by age two. To find out more about her research click here.
• We’re proud of the success we’ve had working with Miami-Dade County Public Schools through our ACCESS partnership. Many of you know we have helped improve student achievement at Miami Northwestern Senior High School through our Education Effect, a university community school partnership between FIU and Miami-Dade County Public Schools that has gained national attention as a model for school transformation. We are busy recreating that success with the Education Effect at Booker T. Washington Senior High School, another historic school in our community. We have hosted David Johns, executive director of the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for African-Americans and the Rev. Al Sharpton at both schools. We look forward to even more exciting news from these schools in the fall!

• Holy Smokes, a Badia Spices pork and meat rub inspired by a mix created by FIU Chaplin School of Hospitality & Tourism Management (CSHTM) recent graduate Jenifer Bound, is now on the shelves. To find out more about the contest and where to purchase it, click here.

• This summer, I took to Twitter to answer your most pressing questions during our second installment of #ASKRosenberg. Our next #ASKRosenberg session will take place Sept. 19 at 3 p.m. Join me and send your questions!

Here are some things to look forward to this semester:

• Join us at this year’s Homecoming festivities the week of October 12-18, 2014. Click here for a recap last year’s most exciting moments.

• The third annual TEDxFIU, with the theme Fearless Journey, will be held Thursday, Nov. 13, 2014 at the Herbert and Nicole Wertheim Performing Arts Center. Please make sure to mark your calendars. For highlights from last year, click here.

• As you walk across our Maidique campus this fall you’ll see we’re growing for the benefit of our FIU community and our neighbors. Academic Health Center 5 is now open. It’s home to the Robert Stempel College of Public Health and Social Work; the Extreme Events Institute, which includes the International Hurricane Research Center; and the Department of Earth and Environment. The new Managing and New Growth Opportunities (MANGO) building will officially open in September, bringing with it new places to eat that include Taco Bell and Panda Express, along with a new Starbucks location. Stay tuned for news about two other big projects under construction on the Maidique Campus – Parking Garage 6 and the Ambulatory Care Center, a partnership with Miami Children’s Hospital that will create South Florida’s first dedicated pediatric ambulatory surgical center.

Now, let’s do our best to welcome our newest Panthers to the family and show them around campus! Join us for the Week of Welcome celebration!

As you explore the campus show your Panther pride by taking a picture with our FIU Panther located in front of FIU Arena and post it on Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter with the hashtag #FIUPanther.
And to get our students pumped up for the new academic year, here’s our welcome back video that you’ll be seeing around campus.

FIU offers you incredible opportunities in and out of the classroom! This is your chance to make your mark and the most of your Worlds Ahead experience.

See you around campus!

Sincerely,

Mark B. Rosenberg