



Worlds Ahead Launch

**Given by Mark B. Rosenberg
on August 22, 2010**



This speech was presented to attendees of FIU's Worlds Ahead branding launch on March 2, 2010.

~ SLIDE: FIWHO? ~

Good morning everyone. So, what's so important that I asked all the faculty and staff to be here today?

Points to screen over his head

That's what's so important.

How many of you have heard that before? How many professors have ever traveled to a conference and gotten the blank stare of unfamiliarity when you say FIU? Don't you think FIU is way too big and far too good for that question?

We are here today to launch a campaign that puts this question to rest. We are here today because FIU is Worlds Ahead and it's time everyone knows it. I know firsthand that our community is hungry for a campaign like this. I also know that our faculty, our students and our alumni want us to elevate our prestige.

Holds up the Community Leaders Summit report.

This is the final report of the Community Leaders Summits that I held last fall with about 200 South Florida leaders. You can pick up a copy on your way out or read it on my website. I'll give you the bottom line of what came out of those summits. The community isn't hearing about FIU's accomplishments or what sets us apart as a university. As a result, we've obviously got an image problem.

Our research demonstrated that pretty clearly. To develop the Worlds Ahead brand, our external relations team worked with a national marketing firm to survey nearly 4,000 members of the FIU community about their perceptions of FIU. Since we have a room full of researchers here, let me add that Senior Vice President Sandy Gonzalez Levy would be happy to share this marketing research with anyone interested.

You should also know that our Foundation had the foresight to fund this branding initiative with private dollars last year. We are implementing the campaign internally with our writers, designers and marketers in External Relations.

Ray Marchman from our Foundation was a longtime champion of this project and he is here today to see it come to life. Why don't you stand and be recognized. Ray, my friend, you are Worlds Ahead. Thank you very much.

As I mentioned, we developed this campaign based on research. When we were done a small piece of the data jumped out at us.

~ *SLIDE: STAMATS Research We Can Do Better.* ~

On average, only 30 percent of the people we surveyed rated FIU as very good or better. That's a whole lot of people thinking we're only average or poor.

How many of you think we're better than this?
I know I do.

If your hand isn't up, why isn't it up? We have to start by building confidence in ourselves right here at FIU. If there's one thing we should all agree on, it's that FIU provides an outstanding education.

I view these numbers as a call to action. That action is Worlds Ahead.

~ *SLIDE: Worlds Ahead & Attributes* ~

The Worlds Ahead campaign is how we are going to tell the FIU story.

These attributes -- vibrant, entrepreneurial, international or global, community focused, accessible and ideally located - capture the spirit of our university. They also provide a roadmap for the future. Through our QEP, FIU will ensure all students have a global education. Through our partnerships with Miami-Dade Public Schools and Miami-Dade College we will remain accessible and community focused. We will cultivate an entrepreneurial approach to the financial challenges of the future.

We will capitalize on our ideal location to strengthen international programs and research. And we will celebrate our athletic and student-life programs to build an ever more vibrant university.

~ *SLIDE: Worlds Ahead Elevator Speech* ~

Worlds Ahead is who we are.

Reads Elevator speech

“Florida International University is a vibrant, student-centered public research university, ideally located in Miami, that is worlds ahead in its commitment to learning, research, entrepreneurship, innovation and creativity so that our graduates are prepared to succeed in a global market.”

This description of FIU rings true because it is true. You can embrace Worlds Ahead because we have done the hard work of building a research university by hiring excellent faculty and motivated professional staff, creating rigorous academic programs, recruiting talented students and attracting research dollars.

Notice what this is not, folks. There’s no new logo here. No mascot. Worlds Ahead is bigger than some icon or gimmick. We’re not interested in seeing you slap Worlds Ahead on your documents. We want to see you demonstrate a Worlds Ahead attitude.

And that’s the other important part of this. One communications office alone cannot change FIU’s public image. If you’re thinking, “This has nothing to do with me,” I’d ask: Do you want to be part of a university that is locally, nationally and internationally recognized for academic excellence? Aren’t you tired of FIWho? Then take ownership of the Worlds Ahead message. Live Worlds Ahead and we will transform FIU’s public image so it reflects the excellence we know to be true. Take responsibility for telling the FIU story.

Sandy’s marketing team is going to do their part with advertising and promotions. But it’s faculty, staff, students and alumni who give Worlds Ahead depth and substance. You do that by being dedicated teachers, innovative researchers and by adopting a student-centered approach at every level of the university. Be Worlds Ahead by taking pride in FIU’s accomplishments and sharing that pride with others. Worlds Ahead asks you for some FIU swagger. Wear your blue and gold and tell people what we’re all about.

I believe Worlds Ahead is the right message for FIU at the right time. It affirms who we are as a vibrant, innovative and creative community of students and scholars. Worlds Ahead is also aspirational. While no university in the world has accomplished what FIU has accomplished in just 40 years – we turned the impossible into the inevitable -- there is still work to be done. Worlds Ahead thinking will push us to improve where we fall short and be even better where we excel.

Worlds Ahead Speakers: Troy Elder Introduction

In a moment, I'm going to bring up Professor Troy Elder from the College of Law. He is the founding director of FIU's Carlos A. Costa Immigration and Human Rights Clinic where law students provide free legal services to immigrants and victims of human rights abuse. Troy is Yale Law School graduate who speaks four languages. As an attorney in France, he specialized in international treaty disputes with foreign countries. Along with expertise in international law, he brought to FIU deep ties in South Florida's non-profit legal community. When I say FIU has Worlds Ahead faculty, I'm talking about professors like Troy Elder. We need to tell these stories more often.

We also need to tell the story of programs like the Carlos Costa Clinic. It symbolizes FIU's Worlds Ahead commitment to this community. Under Troy's leadership, the clinic has built a record of fearless advocacy, trial victories and community partnerships. We all benefit from the clinic's achievements. They're helping FIU win national recognition. Troy is going to tell you more about the clinic. But he is here today because his leadership, passion and dedication make their success possible. Welcome Troy.

President sits. Troy Elder speaks.

Bianny Fernandez introduction

Next, I'm happy to introduce you to Bianny Fernandez, a senior advisor from our Academic Advising Center. Our advisors play a critical role in the education process at FIU and Bianny is one of our best. She specializes in helping the thousands of students who come to FIU every year as undecided majors. It takes a special talent to do this job well and to get it right. The guidance she provides can change a student's life forever. She will tell you that she considers it a privilege to work with students who are undergoing a transformation in their lives. Bianny is Worlds Ahead in her attitude and her innovative approach to helping students find their way. Let's welcome Bianny.

President sits. Bianny Fernandez speaks.

Derek Capo Introduction & Conversation.

President stands and talks to Derek on screen via Skype

Now we're going to do something that is truly Worlds Ahead. Our brand is built on our global perspective and FIU is a community without borders. So, I'd like to introduce one of our Worlds Ahead alumni from the College of Business, Derek Capo. He is coming to us live from Beijing. What time is it there Derek?

Well, it's not bedtime yet but I'd like to thank you for taking part in our event today. Derek tell us a little bit about yourself and what you're doing in China. How did your FIU education prepare you for this move?

One final thing Derek, as an alum, what do you think of the Worlds Ahead campaign? Thank you Derek. I couldn't agree more.

School of Music introduction

And now we have a special treat for you. We've brought together four Worlds Ahead performers from of the School of Music.. Here to perform is the FIU Latin Jazz Quartet: Mauricio Quiros on piano, Hery Paz on tenor saxophone, Max Esquivel on bass and David Chiverton on drums.

~ SLIDE PRESENTATION: Worlds Ahead Thinkers Among Us ~

Terrific. Thank you to our Worlds Ahead School of Music students. You've met some of the Worlds Ahead thinkers at FIU. But there are plenty more:

- Alumnus Dennis Lehane is a Worlds Ahead novelist and screenwriter.
- Former FIU quarterback Paul McCall is a worlds ahead NASA astronaut in training.
- Alumna Teresita Fernandez is a Worlds Ahead artist and MacArthur Genius winner.
- Dr. Pedro Greer is a Worlds Ahead physician who earned a Presidential Medal of Freedom.
- Danijela Tomic is the Worlds Ahead coach of our champion women's volleyball team.
- Professor Allan Richards is a Worlds Ahead journalist and one of the faculty leaders of FIU's partnership with South Florida's newspapers.
- Education Professor Phillip Lazarus is Worlds Ahead as the newly elected president of the National Association of School Psychologists.
- Alumna Cristina O'Hara is Worlds Ahead as the 2011 Miami-Dade Teacher of the Year.
- David Fonseca is a Worlds Ahead student who spearheaded a water conservation drive at FIU.
- Professor Eduardo Gamarra from the School of International and Public Affairs is a Worlds Ahead Latin American expert.
- Alumnus Garth Graham is a Worlds Ahead physician and the US Deputy Assistant Secretary of Minority Health.
- Professor Pilar Martin from the College of Medicine is Worlds Ahead in her commitment to public health in Haiti.
- Our Dance Marathon students are Worlds Ahead in giving back to the community with their annual fundraiser for Miami Children's Hospital.
- Honors College Professor John Bailly is a Worlds Ahead artist and innovative teacher.
- Alumni Justo Pozo and Joe Caruncho are Worlds Ahead businessmen and community leaders.

- James Mickle is our Worlds Ahead president of the USPS Faculty Senate.
- Professor DeEtta Mills is a Worlds Ahead scientist using DNA to help investigators stop the slaughtering of horses.
- Alumna Stephanie Burns is a Worlds Ahead scientist and president of Dow Corning.
- Psychology Professor Bill Pelham is a worlds ahead researcher of ADHD in children.
- Graduate student Ric Soto is the Worlds Ahead founder of FIU's composting initiative.
- Alumna Tayna Lawrence is a Worlds Ahead athlete and Olympic gold medalist.
- Nursing professor Joanne Youngblut is worlds ahead in her research on the health of families with critically ill children.
- Alumnus Carlos Migoya is a Worlds Ahead community leader who has just stepped up to serve as Miami's new city manager.
- Hospitality's Michael Moran is a Worlds Ahead chef and faculty organizer of the South Beach Wine and Food Festival.
- Graduate student Ileana Rodriguez is a Worlds Ahead athlete in training for the 2012 Paralympics.
- Public Health Professor Bill Darrow is a Worlds Ahead HIV and AIDS researcher.
- Alumnus Patrick Denis is a Worlds Ahead nurse who is helping to lead humanitarian relief in Haiti for the US Public Health Service.
- Professor Mira Wilkins is a Worlds Ahead economist widely recognized for her groundbreaking scholarship.
- Engineering Professor Gustavo Roig is worlds ahead for his commitment to strengthening the educational pipeline for Hispanic youth.
- Aime Martinez is the Worlds Ahead business manager of the FIU Foundation.
- Our Student Alumni Association is Worlds Ahead for their award-winning Panther Day of Service .
- And finally our QEP, Global Learning for Global Citizenship is Worlds Ahead.

Rosenberg concludes.

What you have seen and heard this morning is only the beginning. You will be the life and substance of this campaign. We need to hear from you as we move forward. Inside your program is a comment card. Use it to share an idea for the Worlds Ahead campaign.

Outside the ballroom, we have 2 FIU news cameras ready to roll. I'd like to see you stop by and tell our news team how you or someone you know is Worlds Ahead.

Visit the Worlds Ahead webpage where we are collecting stories about research, student and alumni accomplishments, teaching or special initiatives that stand out as Worlds Ahead.

HOLD UP FLIP CAM

We have these groovy Worlds Ahead flip cams in External Relations that are super easy to use if you want to tell your story on video. They are available for you to borrow. Bianny is going to take one with her to the Dominican Republic over spring break.

HOLD UP FIU MAGAZINE

On your way out, you're going to receive the new FIU Magazine, hot off the presses just yesterday. It's full of Worlds Ahead alumni to inspire you.

In the coming months, you will see Worlds Ahead integrated into FIU advertising, promotions and social media communication. You will also see Worlds Ahead thinking in action. For instance, later this spring, our new web team in External Relations will launch the new fiu.edu homepage with a modern, user-friendly design. What are you doing in your units that demonstrates Worlds Ahead thinking? Let us know.

Let us conclude this morning with the debut of our terrific new Worlds Ahead commercial. Everything in this commercial is real FIU, all the faces and all the places. Our scientists in SERC hauled a camera crew out to Everglades and alumnus Octavio Hernandez opened a branch of his US Century bank for filming. Even the soundtrack from comes our alumni musical group Black Violin. This video will be aired on ESPN-U and at football games; it will be on all of our social media sites and the Worlds Ahead website.

This video is probably going to leave you wanting more. Don't worry, we'll be developing more Worlds Ahead video and media with your help.

I leave you with one last question: How are you Worlds Ahead?