MEMORANDUM

TO: University Community

FROM: Mark B. Rosenberg, President

SUBJECT: MLK Breakfast

DATE: January 14, 2022

Good morning everyone, and welcome!

A special thank you to the MLK Committee and to all our students, faculty and staff who have made today’s commemoration possible.

Those of you who have attended FIU’s MLK Commemoration in years past will agree that our event is one of a kind.

In this, our 31st year, we’re back together, in person, as a university community to celebrate a true giant, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., in a way that is meaningful and focused on his life and legacy.

Together, we carry on his spirit of never giving up the dream of a better world a world where each of us plays a role in disrupting inequity and striving to ensure freedom and opportunity are within everyone’s reach.

This year, inspired by our theme of Disrupting Inequity, we are happy to welcome Eddie Glaude, Jr. as this year’s Dotson Family MLK Keynote Speaker.

Before we learn more about Mr. Glaude, I’d like to take a moment to remember Al Dotson, Sr., FIU Board of Trustees Chairman Emeritus, a longtime member of the FIU family, and a dear friend.

Al passed away last year, but his mark on the fabric of our FIU is stronger than ever.

You know, Al used to say that FIU stood for “Finest Institution in the Universe,” and he truly believed it.
It is because of his generosity, his commitment and his belief that FIU plays a pivotal role in making our community better that today – through the generous support of the Dotson Family MLK Speaker Endowment – we’re able to welcome Mr. Glaude.

He is the James S. McDonnel distinguished university professor and chair of the Department of African American Studies at Princeton University.

We are grateful to Mr. Glaude for joining us on this meaningful occasion for all of us and we look forward to drawing inspiration from his knowledge of history and his passion for social justice.

At FIU, we acknowledge and embrace our role in educating our youth about Dr. King and the Civil Rights Movement in helping them appreciate the legacy left by those who came before them and in empowering them to be activists in their own communities.

In late 2019, when our FIU Panthers traveled to Montgomery for the Camellia Bowl, we saw that as an incredible opportunity to expose our students to this crucial part of our nation’s history.

Our Panthers spent hours in and out of Montgomery’s key museums and historical destinations, taking in the significance of sites that played such a pivotal role in our nation’s Civil Rights Movement, led by Dr. King.

They also learned about another civil rights icon, Rosa Parks, known as the “Mother of the Civil Rights Movement” because she refused to give up her seat on the Montgomery City Bus to a white man in 1955.

Her courageous decision eventually led to the 382-day bus boycott in Montgomery.

Mrs. Parks once said, “I would like to be known as a person who is concerned about freedom and equality and justice and prosperity for all people.”

And I believe those words should serve as our guiding light today, when we gather to honor the unifying work of Dr. King.

At our FIU, through our Division of Equity and Inclusion, we draw inspiration from Dr. King’s mission and vision as we work to create a more equitable and just university community.

We believe in keeping Dr. King’s example alive, not just today, but every day.
Let’s work to continue finding ways to honor Dr. King, Mrs. Parks, and so many leaders who inspire us to create a better world.

Our nation needs us now more than ever.

Welcome back! Let’s go!

Sincerely,

Mark B. Rosenberg
President