Dear friends:

Please see my guest column (below) that ran in today’s Tampa Bay Times—Florida’s largest newspaper.

Frank T. Brogan
Chancellor

“Florida Universities on Right Track”

Some things happen overnight. Tides turn. Meteors fall. YouTube videos go viral and fizzle out. (See: The Harlem Shake.)

And then, there is a different kind of change. The kind that comes with time and persistence and a larger sense of purpose. A shift, at times imperceptible, that lasts. For many years, our university system was in a state of flux. We had a governing board, then dismantled it, had another, then dismantled it, added local university boards and then entered a new world of shared control. There have been conflicts, lawsuits, differing philosophies and power struggles: all growing pains.

My, how far we have come.

For the first time in a long time — and notably as we enter this year’s legislative session — Florida's higher education stakeholders are all on the same page. From the Board of Governors and universities to elected officials and business leaders, everyone has the same goals for the State University System: improve quality, expand access and do it in the most accountable, transparent way. What does that look like?

It is the governor, in his State of the State address just last week, supporting performance-based funding for our universities and advocating to help the University of Florida break into the top 10.

It is House and Senate leadership already proposing legislation to support universities’ technology programs and enhance online learning — the tools that will help us build Florida’s knowledge-based economy.

It is our university presidents working together as part of this year’s student-led Aim Higher initiative, pledging to keep tuition low while providing a good return on investment for the state.

We are in a better place than ever, and we are here because of these kinds of commitments. As the next 50 days come and go in a frenetic whirl of budget-hammering and horse-trading and law-making, let us hold to that collaborative spirit. Everyone may not always agree on everything, but we can stand together to voice support for our university system, the second largest in the nation. We are hopeful that, come sine die, we will celebrate that Florida made higher education a priority — not only for the good of our hundreds of thousands of students, but for all of us.

(Link to Tampa Bay Times)
NEXT BOARD MEETING
March 27-28, 2013
Florida A&M University

2013-2016 Board Meeting Calendar >