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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

March 10, 2017

Dear Southernites and Friends,

Carpe Diem! The Latin aphorism means "seize the day." Over the last 48 hours, I've had an opportunity to attend gatherings with members of the Baton Rouge City Council, the Mayor-President of East Baton Rouge, and the Governor of the great state of Louisiana. There has been a theme in these gatherings: we must ensure that Southern University, and the community that Southern serves, continue to thrive and excel. This moment in history is significant. I cannot recall a time in my lifetime where Southern has had so much support among prominent leaders in our city and state. It is important that we seize this opportunity to make our great University even greater! We must seize the day.



Mayor Broome pictured with her new Life Membership Certificate and Award with Dr. Robyn Merrick, Preston Castille and Director Derrick Warren



SGA Presidents Derrick Warren, Zana Harris (current), Johnny Anderson, and Preston Castille at Founders' Day Celebration after Mr. Anderson received 2017 Lifetime Achievement Award

Yesterday, we celebrated Founders' Day. The University honored elected officials who graduated from Southern, as we celebrated its founding 137 years ago. State legislators, judges, mayors, school board members and city council members were acknowledged for their accomplishments and public service. Governor Edward's Deputy Chief of Staff Johnny G. Anderson received the University's Lifetime Achievement Award. I was honored to personally place the beautiful gold medal on Johnny. Mayor-President Sharon Weston Broome served as our keynote speaker. Because Mayor Broome has been such a long-time supporter of Southern, many people believe she is a Southern alumna. Yesterday, the Alumni Federation bestowed upon her an Honorary Life Membership in our organization. She proudly accepted the Life Membership, and once again affirmed her support for our Alma Mater. Welcome to our family, Mayor Broome!



Louisiana Governor John Bel Edwards and Preston Castille



SGA President Zana Harris and Miss Southern University Corinne Vaughn with Preston Castille

The question now is what more can we do in collaboration with these prominent leaders to further strengthen our powerful institution so that it can be of even greater service to this state and country. What more can we do to educate more children? What more can we do to advance more research and health care? What more can we do to engineer positive social change? I'm so pleased that our alumni, locally and across the globe, are continuing to find answers to these questions. Some of the ideas and plans being discussed are so exciting. I can't wait to share more of the details in the future.

Congrats to our basketball team for advancing to the semi-finals in the SWAC Tournament. When the Jaguars play today in Houston, our alums will be there cheering our students on. Tomorrow morning, I'll be at home attending the East Baton Rouge Parish Chapter's Annual Alumni Breakfast, one of the chapter's biggest fundraisers. I'll be thinking about the Atlanta Chapter as they celebrate Founders' Day at the same time in "the ATL." I'll be up early Sunday to make it to Sacramento to support our West Coast Jags and their Founders' Day "Jazzy Brunch." Best of luck to all of our other chapters around the nation who will be hosting similar celebrations.

Have fun this weekend and Happy Founders' Day/Week!

Preston

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