SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY ALUMNI FEDERATION
POST OFFICE BOX 9746
BATON ROUGE, LA 70813-9746

E LinkedIn: http://linkedin.com/in/preston-castille-50527613
E-Mail: Preston.Castille@TaylorPorter.com
Twitter: @PrestonCastille
Direct Dial: 225-381-0217
Mobile: 225-317-3363

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

February 27, 2017

Dear Southernites and Friends,

Laissez Les Bons Temps Rouler! Fat Tuesday is tomorrow and the nation is celebrating! Saturday morning, I attended the Chicago Chapter's Mardi Gras Scholarship Luncheon in the Windy City. Later that night, I attended the D.C. Chapter's Mardi Gras Gala in Bethesda, Maryland, which is located in Montgomery County. The County Executive (akin to a mayor-president) of Montgomery County is Isiah "Ike" Leggett and a Southern alumnus. Mr. Leggett did what no other elected official has done since I've been National President. After he and I spoke at the Gala, he came back to our table, pulled out his checkbook, wrote a $2,500 check to the Alumni Federation, and handed it to me. That's my kind of public servant! I had just shared with the crowd how impressed I was with the incredible network of alumni we have all over the country. I also shared my gratitude for the chapter supporting the Federation's major recruitment initiative in 2014-15 that helped increase Freshman enrollment by 31% that year. Of course, I could not wait to share with the D.C. alums my favorite Federation project, the expansion of Southern University into downtown Baton Rouge this semester.

	
The First Couple of the D.C. Chapter, President Vincent Brown and Treasurer Verna Brown	**Cook Country Clerk Dorothy Brown, Chicago Chapter President DuWarn Porter and his lovely mother, Mrs. Evelyn Porter**

Mr. Leggett has one of the most amazing personal stories I've ever heard. Mr. Leggett grew up in abject poverty in a three-room, shot gun home in Alexandria, LA. He came to Southern with nothing but the will to succeed. And, boy did he succeed! He was a student leader, in the ROTC, became a commissioned officer, went to law school at Howard University, and earned one of the highest GPAs in the history of the school. A former Army Captain and Vietnam Veteran, Mr. Leggett later became a Professor and Associate Dean of the Howard Law School. He has had an incredible career in public service and is now in his third term as County Executive of one of the largest and wealthiest counties in America, with an annual budget larger than seven states. His story is powerful and his willingness to support Southern University is inspiring. Mr. Leggett's contribution will be used to purchase "Southern University" signs that will be placed on the downtown building. I personally and publicly thank Mr. Leggett for his service to our Alma Mater, the citizens of Montgomery County, and this nation.

	**County Executive Isiah "Ike" Leggett and Montgomery County First Lady Catherine Leggett**
	**Dr. Rudolph and Dr. Jannette Hoston Harris, King and Queen of the D.C. Mardi Gras Gala. The D.C. Chapter has named a scholarship in the couple's name.**

At the D.C. Mardi Gras Gala, I sat next to Dr. Jannette Hoston Harris. It was the best seat in the house, as I was not only entertained by the band on the stage, but by the incredible stories by Dr. Harris. She was able to share with me her powerful experience at Southern during the Civil Rights Movement. I was able to hear about her role in the Kress Building Sit-In that led to her and other SU students being arrested and later expelled from the University. The stories were so powerful that I asked her if she wouldn't mind allowing me to video her for a few minutes so that I could share a small piece of her story with all of you. I have attached the video here in ***News & Notes*** for you to share my experience and this little known, Southern University and Black History moment. https://youtu.be/i0MqHnMMJkw. (My apologies for the background noise.)

	**D.C. Area Jags enjoying casino life at Bethesda Blues & Jazz Supper Club – only Monopoly money, but still having fun**
	**Federation Regional Co-Director, Regina Valentine, (2nd from left), and Gala Chair, Nicole Priester (center) showing off their beautiful gowns with other alumnae**

I cannot thank D.C. Chapter President Vincent Brown and his brilliant wife, Verna, enough for their incredible leadership over the last four years. Similarly, the Federation's Chief of Staff, Shayla McCullough, is a past president of the D.C. chapter. As a national officer and local leader, she continues to serve and make that chapter one of the best in the country. The evening was spectacularly coordinated by Nicole Priester, President and CEO of Encore Solutions. She literally rolled out the red carpet for the Jags at the Bethesda Blues & Jazz Supper Club. From the VIP reception, to the phenomenal Jazz Band, to the DJ who kept the party hopping until the wee hours of the morning, the night was fun-filled and all in the name of scholarships and alumni camaraderie. Well done, Nicole! I even made it to Eldred Jackson's After Party. "El", as he is affectionately known, leads our Top Jags program

from the East Coast, while Patricia Deamer, in Oakland, leads the the program from the West Coast. They recruit some of the most academically qualified students in the country to Southern.



Kathleen Watson, Clara Hubbard, Preston Castille, DuWarn Porter and Natisha Johnson getting ready for Chicago Mardi Gras Scholarship Luncheon



SU Board Member, Dr. Leroy Davis, and his wife, Mrs. Elaine Davis attended the Chi Town Luncheon

My visit earlier that day with the Chicago Chapter was similarly inspiring and powerful. Chicago Chapter President DuWarn Porter and the Chi Town alums delivered another successful scholarship event. The good times rolled as the Windy City Jags celebrated the Mardi Gras season, and coupled the festivities with lots of scholarships and awards to students from the Chicago area. Again, I was treated like royalty and had the opportunity to sit at President Porter's table next to Dr. Leroy and Mrs. Elaine Davis. Dr. Davis is the former mayor of Baker, LA, a former SU dean, and one of the newest members of the SU Board of Supervisors. It meant so much to the Chicago area Southernites to have a member of the Board of Supervisors attend the scholarship luncheon and provide an update on the progress of our university from the management board's perspective.

	**National Chaplain Betty Fuller entertaining Chicago alums and guests getting ready for luncheon**

Also at President Porter's table was the host of "Senior Talk" radio show and SU alumna, Clara Hubbard, who served as the mistress of ceremony for the program. Cook County Clerk of the Circuit Court and Southern Alumna, Attorney Dorothy Brown, sat at our table. Alumna Brown is now in her fourth term as County Clerk, which is one of the most important positions in the judicial system in Cook Country. Alumni Federation Chaplain Betty Fuller had her own table. Chaplain Fuller is a former Chicago educator and continues to be a loyal supporter of the Chicago Chapter as well as her local chapters in Baton Rouge, where she now resides.

	
President DuWarn Porter and Harold "Lightening" Joseph, Sr. Student Athlete Awardee, Jamal Bouldin, a Jaguar Football player and December 2016 grad	**Track & Field Student Athlete, Ambrosia Williams, also received the Harold "Lightening" Joseph, Sr. Award from the Chicago Chapter**

I was moved by the large number of young Jaguars as well as seasoned Jags at the Mardi Gras event. For example, Jamal Boulding, who just graduated in December 2016, received the Harold "Lightening" Joseph, Sr. Student Athlete Award. During his acceptance speech, Jamal, a former member of the Jaguar football team, explained how the chapter helped recruit him to Southern and then mentored him throughout his years at Southern. Ambrosia Williams, who also received the "Lightening" Award, shared a similar story of gratitude toward the Chi Town Alums.

It is this powerful network of alumni and Federation chapters that make this University great!! I get to see up close and personal the demonstrations of love and loyalty to Southern all around this nation. I'm gearing up for Memphis this weekend and look forward to seeing Memphis Chapter President LaToria Howard Friday night for the Memphis Scholarship & Masquerade Ball.

Happy Mardi Gras, Jags & Knights!!

Preston

Preston J. Castille, Jr., Esq., National President
HBCU Alumni Coalition President