Southern University Alumni Federation

Post Office Box 9746

Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70813-9746

E-mail: Preston.Castille@TaylorPorter.com
Direct Dial: 225-381-0217
Direct Fax: 225-215-8750
Mobile: 225-317-3363

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Southernites and Friends:



As I walked around the ULM football stadium last Saturday night, I looked over at the visitors' side and the sea of blue and gold was impressive (see picture at right). The loyal Jaguar Nation showed up in huge numbers for the season opener. As I made my way back to my seat among our fans, it appeared that we had more Jaguars in Warhawk stadium than ULM fans. There was no doubt that our alumni love Southern University. Thanks again to Chapter President Dilcie Green and the entire Monroe chapter for welcoming us to Northeast Louisiana. I'm on my way to the Big Easy today, and Patrice Hopkins and the New Orleans Chapter have planned a fabulous weekend for us.

Our mighty Jaguars take on my law school alma mater, Tulane, this weekend. Fear not. I will be proudly wearing my blue and gold. I enjoyed my law school experience at Tulane, but it was nothing like the amazing undergraduate experience I had at Southern. My time on "the yard" was some of the best years of my life. Southern was my extended family. It gave me an opportunity to blossom as a young scholar and student leader, to become SGA president, to serve on the Louisiana Board of Regents, to pledge a fraternity, and learn life skills that have shaped my entire career. I left Southern prepared to compete against anyone.

I'll never forget my first week of class at Tulane. My classmates were from countries around the world, Ivy League schools, and some of the most influential families in the state and country. I must confess that as a kid from the small towns of Port Barre, Plaisance, and Opelousas, the first few days I questioned whether I belonged there. But, by the end of the week, I had no doubt that I was as good as anyone from anywhere. The foundation that Southern had given me, prepared me for anything that Tulane could throw at me.

Surprisingly though, the undergraduate population at Tulane was not much larger than that of Southern's at that time. However, there was a stark difference in the resources of Tulane and Southern's resources. Tulane, as a private institution, with relatively little government support, had managed to build phenomenal academic programs and an impressive campus of buildings. Tulane had seemingly perfected the art of raising private funds through tuition, generous donations, and unbelievable philanthropy from Tulane alumni.

Take a look around Tulane's campus along with Yulman Stadium this weekend. Pop into the medical school downtown and take a tour of the business school and the law school on the main campus. Take in the power of what alumni can do to continue to support their university long after they graduate. As we show up in our usual incredible numbers to watch the Jaguars play football, please give some thought to what more we can do to make our academic programs, buildings and grounds better. Please consider getting more deeply

involved with the Alumni Federation and supporting our collaborative efforts with the University and our System Foundation ***to make our great University greater***.

I'm a proud Southern graduate. So to my Tulane Green Wave schoolmates, I hope you understand this weekend when you see me cheering for the Jaguars!

Sincerely,

Preston

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