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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

March 27, 2017

Dear Southernites and Friends:

Yesterday, I attended the Lafayette Metropolitan Chapter Annual Founders' Day and Scholarship Banquet. Chapter President John Broussard, Banquet Committee Chairlady Irene Bernard, and the entire chapter did a wonderful job organizing a first-class event. The chapter awarded scholarships to four Lafayette area seniors at the banquet. Their parents were there, and so excited about their children's decision to attend Southern and their receipt of an alumni scholarship. At the banquet, I bumped into an alum who has been keeping up with my travels around the country and he said, "you must be getting tired?" I responded, "Not at all. I am living the dream. Our chapters are doing such a great job assisting the University recruit students and funding scholarships across this nation. It is truly invigorating." I am thankful for all of the local volunteer alumni leaders who continue to "**Make our Great University Greater!**"



Lafayette Chapter President, John Broussard, Banquet Committee Chair, Irene Bernard, and Dr. Robert Rene' present alumni scholarship to one of our newest Jaguars!



Federation Officers and University Administrators, along with SU Board Member Pat Magee joined President Belton at the Lafayette Chapter Banquet

President Belton served as the keynote speaker for the banquet. As he has done at other alumni events, he shared with the audience my favorite SU project: the University's efforts to expand the footprint of Southern University to downtown Baton Rouge. He shared with the crowd that the System began offering five law school classes downtown this semester, and more are planned for the future. Dr. Belton mentioned that the College of Business is developing a proposal to move its MBA Program to downtown Baton Rouge, to give its students more opportunities to interface with the business community, to develop greater internship and externship opportunities, and to bring the Southern University brand to the heart of downtown Baton Rouge. As the audience cheered, I could feel the Jaguar Pride growing as our President shared these efforts to expand Southern's footprint.



Preston Castille and Dr. Robert Rene' with Lafayette Chapter Scholarship Recipients



Dr. Rene' shows off the University's new yard sign with a sold-out crowd in the background of the Lafayette Chapter Banquet

Lately, I have been asked by several different people if the School of Education would have a downtown presence for its graduate students. The notion of Southern being at the forefront of teacher education and training in the heart of downtown Baton Rouge is a great idea. After all, teacher education and educational leadership are at the core of Southern's very existence. Given

the incredible shortage of teachers around the city, state and country, an innovative approach to the delivery of course offerings and continuing education could be the shot in the arm that our School of Education needs. In a few weeks, I am traveling back to Harvard to assist a student defend her capstone for her doctorate in education. Harvard has done a fantastic job of discovering non-traditional ways to produce some of the top educational scholars and leaders in the country. I understand the SU Graduate School of Education already has developed the necessary programs that would be ideal for downtown. Perhaps, this is the System's next big move!

	
Fraternities and Sororities team up to promote upcoming Home Chapter Crawfish Boil & Music Festival	**Band Director Nathan Haymer, Home Chapter President Cortny Jarrell and Alumni Director Derrick Warren at the filming of the commercial for the chapter's Crawfish Boil & Music Festival**

Chapters are now starting to prepare for their annual crawfish boils around the country. These events bring together alumni and continue to promote the great experiences of a Southern University education. They are great networking opportunities to allow alums to connect across the nation. Our chapters are becoming more creative in promoting the events and the Southern brand at the same time. The Home Chapter has been filming commercials to promote its Crawfish Boil and Music Festival. The Dallas, Atlanta, Houston and D.C. chapters are all over social media promoting their upcoming crawfish boils. I'm sure I'll be hearing from the California chapters soon about their annual crab boils. While these events are chapter fundraisers, I have

to admit the best part for me is the camaraderie that makes the bonds of the Gold and Blue even stronger for many years after we graduate and spread our wings throughout the nation and the globe.

I'm so proud I went to Southern U!

Sincerely,

Preston

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