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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

December 18, 2017

Dear Southernites and Friends:

Congratulations to all our Southern University System graduates. Yesterday, we welcomed more than 500 new alumni into the Jaguar Nation at SUBR's graduation. SULC graduate and celebrity television judge, Faith Jenkins ("Judge Faith"), was our commencement speaker. She shared her story about persevering when certain opportunities and doors close. She said, "not every closed door is a bad thing." This is such a great message. It is so important to continue to look for new opportunities and never succumb to initial disappointment. I'm so proud of our new alumni, and we look forward to your continued service to our alma mater. It is important that we give back and support our University as it has opened so many doors for so many people.

By now, you should have received the most recent issue of THE SOUTHERNITE. It is branded as our "relaunch," and is available in both digital and traditional paper format. It has been long-awaited, but well worth the wait. It is packed full of great spotlights about alumni across the country. It captures much of what the Federation has been doing over the last several months and the impact alumni are having on the progress and growth of our University. It features a great article on the ***Imagine 20,000*** project that is nearing the end of the first step of the planning phase, as the work of the task forces is winding down and the consultants are beginning to gather your feedback from the survey we recently emailed to you.

The prospect of growing enrollment to 20,000 students over the next 10 - 15 years is an ambitious goal. I'm particularly pleased with the progress we are making on a few components that the University, Foundation, and Federation identified in the ***Imagine 20,000*** grant application to the Baton Rouge Area Foundation. First, the RFQ for the Foundation's Valdry Center for Philanthropy was released earlier this week. Second, the Southern University downtown location just completed its third semester, and we are expanding our course offerings next semester. Third, the Center for Alumni and Economic Development is continuing to make progress. Danter & Associates, the Federation's consulting firm, has produced a report that supports a residential component that will house 400 residents on our beautiful riverfront property as part of the Alumni Center.

Kudos to Assistant Executive Director Khadijah Campbell, who led the production of THE SOUTHERNITE, and Executive Director Derrick Warren, who continued to shepherd this relaunch across the finish line. In the paper version of THE SOUTHERNITE, you will receive an envelop to

pay your Federation dues and financially support the Federation. Please take a moment, read the magazine, and give back to our organization.

Congrats again to our graduates, and Merry Christmas to everyone!

Sincerely,



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