

**President's State of the University Address
Presented at the General Assembly Meeting
August 16, 2010
Orangeburg, South Carolina**

Thank you Dr. Blackwell for that warm introduction.

Welcome! I hope that you all have had a prosperous summer, and are excited about the beginning of the semester here at SC State.

I would like to acknowledge the presence of Board Members in attendance. Chairman Jonathon Pinson, Trustee Robert Nance, and Trustee Patricia Lott. Also I want to acknowledge our First Lady, Diane Cooper.

I want to begin by thanking you for all of your support in the recruitment and enrollment process. This week-end

we welcomed more than 887 freshman and 190 transfer students to SC State, and we are excited about the Class of 2014, who are “Raising the Bar, and Rising to Excellence!”

As shared before, customer service is extremely important, and you know that at SC State students are first.

I have received many emails, telephone calls, and personal greetings from parents and students about the quality service that they received during the registration and move-in process, so I want to say to you all... Thank you for your service.

These are challenging times – times that impact us all. We are challenged personally, as an institution, and publicly. I stand before you today excited about the opportunities

that the future holds for us and with an absolute confidence that we'll meet those challenges head on and come out stronger than ever before.

Today, I want to share with you challenges and success of our university and what it means – and can mean – to each and every one of us.

Since, January we have accomplished much at SC State. As you already know, like all South Carolina state agencies, we have experienced significant declines in State fiscal appropriations. State appropriations to SC State have declined 49 percent since FY 2008; however, together, we focused on priorities and with a number of belt tightening and management strategies, we ended the

fiscal year in the black. I want you to know that I sincerely appreciate the sacrifices that you all made to ensure the financial stability of SC State; therefore the Administration and I have agreed to return one furlough day as a bonus, to most employees who were impacted. We could have used the funds to support our contingency, or for deferred maintenance, but we wanted to show our appreciation and gratitude to you, for your support of SC State. You will receive an additional check on August 20.

In the academe, an accredited institution is the “seal” that signifies the quality of an academic degree.

Currently, we are completing our final report related to the reaffirmation of Accreditation of SC State

University by The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools/Commission on Colleges. The vote on the reaffirmation will take place in December 2010 at the Lexington, Kentucky meeting. The SC State University Web Site has a link to the documents submitted relative to the reaffirmation of accreditation process, so please take a look, and follow the process towards the reaffirmation of our accreditation.

PRIORITIES

We will continue our focus on the major University priorities for the 2010-2011 Academic Year. The priorities were determined to ensure and maintain

strength in the academy (QEP, Honors College, Student Success and Retention, improved use of technology); support critical student support functions (Admissions and Recruitment); ensure that our campus is safe (campus security and deferred maintenance); and embrace the use of technology to improve teaching and learning and streamline our business process (Banner).

NEW EDUCATION INITIATIVES

This year, we are excited about a number of new initiatives that will take place during this upcoming school term.

Approval was granted by the Board of Trustees to elevate our Honors Program to College status. The inaugural class of SC State's Honors College converged on campus on Friday. Also to maintain our competitive edge, SC State will introduce its major in Communications this fall; as well as introduce a Mandarin Chinese Class, which faculty, staff, and students are encouraged to enroll; however, I understand that it has already reached capacity... which is a great problem to have.

Being an 1890 Land-Grant University and understanding that we are, by our founding required us to provide access and opportunity for students. We know that we had to meet the needs of traditional as well as non-

traditional students. Therefore, we have launched the week-end college for adult learners. Students will have an opportunity to earn bachelor degrees in accounting, criminal justice, and social work, and master degrees in rehabilitation counseling, and business administration. Further, to meet the needs of those adult learners, we have partnered with “Education to Go,” and will offer high quality online learning to working professionals.

We also initiated the Student Leadership Academy, supported by SC State’s Business and Industry Cluster. The focus of the Academy is on enhancing the soft skills required for students to be successful in corporate America,

OTHER HIGHLIGHTS

As a University, you are doing phenomenal things, and we thank you.

- Dr. Waltena Simpson, we thank you for your bioremediation study that could assist with the clean-up on the Gulf Coast;
- Mrs. Kay Snider and the Staff Senate, we thank you for initiating a “green project in cooperation with our students. We will begin paper, aluminum and plastic recycling. Fifty percent of the net income will go to support student scholarships.

- Dr. Stanley Harris, we thank you for your dedication to the Nursing profession, and being chosen as an item writer for the National Council Licensure Exam;
- Dr. Dior Konte, we thank you for the research you conducted on African Studies at Indiana University;
- Dr. Mary Grimes, we thank you for the work that you have and continue to do at the Greenville Center, and congratulate you on being named an American Council on Education Fellow;
- Dr. Lijana Bozinovska we thank you for your impactful research on the study of bio-fabrication and bio-robotics

- And Dr. Leonard McIntyre, we thank you for all of the dedicated work that you have done to ensure that SC State's TLMP Program, is the premier program in the Nation. For your information, Dr. McIntyre isn't here today, as he and Mr. Drammeh are representing SC State at the Handing-Over Ceremony which will take place tomorrow in Tanzania. To date we have produced more than 1.2 million textbooks and learning materials in Zanzibar, East Africa.

I have mentioned only a few of the many who have accomplished much, and asked little of SC State University in return. Those that I didn't mention please know that I sincerely THANK YOU TOO...

Other SC State highlights include:

- The AACSB reaffirmation of our business program, the distinct honor that is held by only 5 percent of Business schools across the world;
- All engineering programs were reaccredited by ABET this year;
- Felton Laboratory School was reaffirmed for accreditation by SACS-COC this year.
- The restructuring and additional support given to Student Success and Retention

RESEARCH

Total research grant funding at SC State University was \$17.7 million (July 1, 2008- June 30, 2009). Grant funding is expected to exceed \$21 million by the end of the Federal Fiscal year September 30, 2010, based on reported funding levels ending February 28, 2010 (\$18 million)

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

Now let me address the James E. Clyburn Transportation Research Center of which there has been much discussion and attention lately. Let me be clear in stating that we will be transparent and will satisfactorily address every question being raised. And, we are moving forward.

As many of you are aware, the Construction of the first phase of the James E. Clyburn Transportation Research Center has begun. Construction is scheduled to be completed 350 days from the commencement of construction which was July 14. The building will include

offices, large bays for research on transportation vehicles and a training room. Before I move forward with the other capital improvements being made, I want to say to you, first and foremost that SC State is NOT missing \$50 million dollars for the James E. Clyburn University Transportation Center. I have been assured by staff that all of the funds both for the Center's program's and construction can be accounted for. I can't explain why this rumor has manifested, and I do understand the impact that this negative information has had on our brand, but I am confident that once the Legislative Audit Council conducts its audit the results will prove that SC State has been a good financial steward for these funds.

With that being said, the other projects are as follows. The Hodge Hall Annex (science building) is almost completed and occupancy is expected at the beginning of the 2010 academic year. The Board of Trustees has approved naming the annex after SC State's 8th President Dr. Leroy Davis. We are working with Drs. Joyce Blackwell and Judith Salley on the arrangements for the official naming ceremony, which you will all be invited to.

Another facility which we are excited about is the New Science and Engineering building at SC State. The final plans for that ground breaking ceremony are near completion as well. The facility will house Engineering, Computer Science and Physics.

And a project that has been many years in the making has come to fruition. The Alumni Heritage Fund, an initiative of SC State's 9th President, Dr. Andrew Hugine Jr. was to provide in perpetuity symbols on campus for and in honor of various alumni and stakeholders. So you will notice recent improvements, to include the placement of benches and engraved bricks in the Memorial Plaza, and benches near Oliver C. Dawson Football Stadium and Hugine Suites.

... And speaking of Football, I know that all of you are going to support our team, who is "Building an Empire of Champions," as they compete for their third consecutive conference championship. I know that Mrs. Johnson,

Coach Buddy Pough and Coach Tim Carter and the athletic staff and athletes will appreciate your support of Bulldog Athletics by purchasing season tickets for football and basketball.

We also recognize that our men's and women's tennis teams were also conference champions, and I would like to acknowledge that our Head Football Coach Emeritus, Willie Jeffries was inducted into the NCAA Coaches Hall of Fame.

COMMUNICATION

We are making every effort to improve communications between the university and its various constituencies to share good news about SC State, and to

ensure that we are effectively doing that, most especially when dealing with members of the press; I am asking that you adhere to the Media Policy and refer all media inquiries to the Office of University Relations and Marketing. They will work with you to have appropriate responses made in writing and through delegation. This policy is in no way intended to censure you, but it is intended to ensure that SC State's brand and the integrity of it is protected. One new publication that I hope that you all are enjoying is the E-Newsletter, introduced by Mr. Holloman in Institutional Advancement. It is another vehicle in addition to the other press releases and communications that you receive has really begun to rally

SC State's alumni, friends, and stakeholders to her call. Also, we have begun season two of the University's television show "A New STATE of Mind" Directed by Mrs. Erica Taylor. The show airs in major markets across the state to include here in Orangeburg, Charleston, Columbia, and Greenville, I encourage you to watch and you can check the website for the specific dates, times, and channels.

I have also been scheduling editorial board interviews with major news outlets in South Carolina to share information about SC State and the educational opportunities provided to students who receive their education at our university. Interviews have been

scheduled in Charleston, Columbia, Greenville and Beaufort, SC and Savannah, GA. Last year's interviews resulted in positive press for SC State University by majority and minority media outlets.

FUNDRAISING

SC State met its fundraising goal for fiscal year 2009-2010 of \$2.4 million dollars, an increase of four hundred thousand more than the previous year. Again, I am so proud to be associated with resilient individuals who like you, even during a recession gave of themselves to assist SC State. Our corporate giving increased, as we received gifts from major companies such as BMW, Progress Energy, and Construction Dynamic among others. We

also received gifts from Fluor Corporation and Savannah River Nuclear Solutions, LLC, and announced our first corporate naming opportunity in SC State's history, as well as received over three hundred and fifty thousand dollars from anonymous donors. But, not only did our corporate giving increase, our alumni giving increased as well, up to 14%, but only with about 1250 donors contributing. We must do more to collectively encourage persons to give to Alma Mater. And although the economy still leaves a lot of challenges for individuals and corporations, we must still strive to raise funds, as we now understand the only way to support SC State is to do it ourselves. Therefore, I have challenged Mr. Holloman to

work with me to raise \$3 million dollars, most of which will be used to support need based scholarships. I'm confident that together we can reach that goal.

Some of the initiatives that we will introduce to make that happen will include the launching a Phon-A-Thon, and a mobile giving campaign, both of which you will learn more about in the upcoming weeks, so if you can, please give, because I am, as well as the entire administration. I hope they don't mind me sharing this, but the members of the President's Cabinet have decided to each contribute no less than two thousand dollars during the 2010-2011 fiscal year.

PERSONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- I am proud to share that I was elected by my peers to serve as Chair of the Council of 1890 Presidents and Chancellors for a two-year term beginning in November 2010. The Council serves as an advocate group for the eighteen historically black land grant universities. Our focus is related to political advocacy with Federal agencies in Washington, DC and relationships with corporate interests that can assist in advancing our land grant missions.
- I also presented an award to Congressman James E. Clyburn during a recent NAFEO meeting in Washington, D.C.;

- Was the George Washington Carver Lecturer at Tuskegee University;
- Served as a member of NCAA Peer Review Team for Texas Southern University;
- Have now visited 29 of the 38 SC State alumni chapters;
- Served as the Prayer Breakfast Speaker for the Orangeburg Community ;
- Presented at the NAFEO President's Retreat in Braselton, Georgia;
- And, was the Men's Day Speaker at Chapel Hill Baptist Church in Santee, South Carolina

CLOSING

As we look to the future, the University is in the process of developing the 2011-2016 Strategic Plan. This plan will outline the University priorities and areas of concentration for enhancing our operation. Some of those strategic priorities are:

- Aligning academic programs with the market;
- Enhancing institutional processes and resource allocation;
- Upgrading facilities to accommodate current and future university needs;
- Enhancing the role of research in supporting SC State's internal and external goals;

- Improving the university's image and brand through increased community involvement;
- Increasing revenue through enhance fundraising initiatives; AND
- Promoting the University's competitive advantages (niche(s) in academic and non-academic areas of excellence).

I will look to you for suggestions as we move through this process, and encourage your participation in this endeavor.

In closing, I want you to know that I appreciate your support of me as your 10th president, an honor that I have enjoyed for the past two years. SC State University is a

jewel. We will always have challenges and we will always overcome them. We're SC State University. We aren't just individuals. We're a family. We're here for the success and future of our beloved students. And we will successfully move forward together with "A New STATE of Mind."

Thank You !