

Faculty-Staff Institute
August 12, 2009
Chancellor's Message

To those who share the stage with me this morning, to the Administrative Council, Deans, Departmental Chairs, Faculty and Staff; welcome back to Elizabeth City State University. When we closed our last academic year in May 2009, I thanked you all for a job well done. As you may recall, I also highlighted many of the accomplishments of the year as well as some of our pitfalls. As with any upcoming year, we will face additional challenges, but we will also celebrate our accomplishments.

It is imperative that we continue to maintain a positive image and be ever mindful of the work ahead of us. As we embark upon another school year, I must emphasize the importance of serving our students....that is why we exist!

I am reminded that in 1891, Mr. Hugh Cale made his journey to Raleigh, our state's capitol. He had a mission to create an institution of higher learning that would be sited in Elizabeth City, NC. This mission was to develop the minds of individuals within a given time span to go out and enhance the quality of life for citizens in northeastern North Carolina. Those individuals left with a degree in Teacher Education and were able to impact the minds of mankind as a result of their experience at ECSU. It is our duty, 118 years later, to protect the integrity and the high standards of this institution.

As your Chancellor, I remain committed to provide you , the faculty, staff, students, and stakeholders; my support, dedication, loyalty and leadership.

Many of you in the audience this morning may recall the university's tagline; "If you look to the Northeast you will see a

shining star and the star would be Elizabeth City State University.”

Sometime later, the university, having grown in size, academic offerings, etc., coined the phrase; “ECSU - Your Place to Succeed.” I was personally pleased with the work of the Installation committee, formed in 2005 who decided on yet another tagline to describe this great university; “A Journey Towards Excellence.”

Well all of these brand identities were very true and fitting for our institution, however, we must now “elevate higher, emerge stronger”. We must put our best efforts forward and become even more competitive in this global society.

Elizabeth City State University, a constituent institution of The University of North Carolina, offers baccalaureate programs in the arts and sciences, professional and pre-professional areas, as well as master’s degrees in selected disciplines. Originally an

institution for African-American students, the university's rich heritage provides a strong background for its increasingly multicultural student body. By providing an academically rigorous, student-centered learning environment, the university prepares students for responsible participation and leadership in an ever-changing world. Through teaching, research, and community outreach, the university is a valuable resource for developing the intellectual capital of the state and the nation and for addressing the environmentally economic needs of northeastern North Carolina. - Ladies and gentlemen; OUR MISSION.

My first challenge to you today is to be diligent and steadfast to ensure a successful outcome with our SACS Reaffirmation. It is imperative that faculty and staff work as a team to meet deadlines. It is crucial that each one of us provide data in a timely manner; yes, meet or beat your deadlines!

Every school, department, or individual plays a major role in this important process. Each of us must elevate our thought pattern higher, and Elizabeth City State University will emerge stronger as a result. Faculty credentials are important in this process. We are committed to assisting individuals in becoming successful in this endeavor. We realize there will be sacrifices; however, the reward is much greater. Please adhere to the requests and assignments issued by our SACS team. Make sure that you attend meetings. Call them if you have any questions. We can and will accomplish this together.

Let me take time to thank each faculty and staff member for your support of your department chairs; and deans, with your consent, I would like to thank the chairs on your behalf.

Challenge Two

Last academic year, I emphasized the demands of President Bowles and the governor as it relates to the state budget. The entire state, as well as the nation, is facing a crisis. We will continue to tighten our belts and make wise decisions about spending. Let us not use our energy to complain but to be creative in how we do business. Realizing that there are budget constraints, we must be determined to emerge even stronger. We must continue providing the best educational experience possible. We will do all we can to maintain the core values of our mission. A quality education for our students cannot and will not be compromised. I challenge each of you to work smarter in order for us to accomplish our goals.

With the approval of 85% of our budget for expenditures this fiscal year, we must remind ourselves of President Obama's words, "yes we can." With fewer supplies, less travel, little or no new

equipment, fewer faculty, a hiring freeze, and more students...“yes we can.”

Finally, Challenge Three

Our recruitment efforts are not benefitting us if we are not willing to go the extra mile in improving our retention rate. I am asking that all instructors take the time to meet with Dr. Monette Williams, Ms. Lolita Turner, Mrs. Sherry Lewis, and Mr. Derrick Wilkins to help provide the necessary services to ensure the academic success of our students. Remember, without them and our increase in student enrollment, our budget cuts would be even larger. When we need to be available for office hours – be available. Where tutorial services are needed – recommend and follow through. When re-assessing may become necessary – handle

it. We are slightly ahead of our peer institutions with our retention rate, so let us work to ensure this ratio is maintained.

Remember, in most cases, a word of encouragement can make the difference in whether or not a student is successful. I am challenging each of you to elevate your strategies to a higher level to empower our students holistically, so they emerge stronger becoming leaders in all areas of endeavor in our global society.

I would like to leave you with three things to remember as we move through this academic year:

SACS Reaffirmation – it's an everyday priority;

Be creative with your departmental funding;

Good customer service = Student Retention.

I look forward to working with each of you this year as we elevate higher than we ever thought possible in these challenging economic times, and emerge even stronger, solidifying our place as one of the nation's best institutions of higher learning.