



PRESIDENT'S SPEECH

CSU Alumni Annual Meeting Saturday, March 1, 2014 – 11:00AM

To our President, Officers, and Members of the CSU Alumni Association, welcome home. Special greetings to the members of the class of 1964 and to our administrators and staff.

First, I would like to introduce members of my cabinet, Deans and other CSU Administrators who are present this morning.

In the time I have with you this morning I want to give you a sense of my vision for Coppin, and share with you the many exciting things happening at Coppin.

In January, I celebrated my one year anniversary as Coppin's President and as I gave my "State of The University Address to the Campus" I took great pride in sharing the many positive things that are moving Coppin forward.

Here are just a few highlights:

- **We restored fiscal stability to Coppin by balancing our budget**, moving beyond several years of budget deficits and administrative management issues.
- **We have made several personnel changes in key areas**, VP Admin & Finance, Provost & VP for Academic Affairs, new Financial Aid Director
- **We have been re-accredited by Middle States**
- **Our Academic Structure has been reorganized** into 4 Colleges and to enhance efficiencies, improve retention, graduation and achieve greater student outcomes.
- **We have launched a new marketing and advertising** campaign to start rebuilding Coppin's image and support student recruitment – The visual ads feature successful CSU Alumni.
- **We broke ground on the new Science and Technology Building** which will enable Coppin to aggressively offer STEM

- **We came together to restore an important tradition of honoring our university's namesake** with a campus-wide observance of Fannie Jackson Coppin Week and Founders Day.
- **We are having success with our Near Completers Program** which reaches out to students who were close to completing their degree but stopped out.
- **We opened a Child Care Center** to assist students who are parents so that they can attend classes
- **On the Athletic front, we were just awarded another round of NCAA grant funding** which is strengthening the academic performance of our student-athletes. Coppin is one of only 6-universities nationally to receive this \$900,000 grant over 3 yrs.
- Our **Women's Volleyball Team** earned second place in the MEAC Volleyball Tournament.
- Our **Club Football team defended their title** and was crowned the 2013 National Club Football Association Champions.
- **Today we celebrate our Homecoming with a basketball match-up between Coppin and UMES**, which is special for me.
- **And finally, we are uplifting our spirits** with the return of our Gospel Choir. We have also created a **Faith Based Advisory group** to re-engage the local Faith Based community with Coppin. **Tomorrow is Coppin Sunday at Bethel AME, 9:30 a.m. service and I hope many of our Alumni will join us.**

We have accomplished much over the past year that we all can be proud of, however, there is still much to do. Speaking of the work still before us, I'd like to update you on an important plan that we are implementing to stabilize and strengthen Coppin, and how this plan fits with my vision for the future of Coppin.

As you may know and perhaps heard in the media, a Special Coppin Review Committee was named over a year ago by the USM Board of Regents. The Committee was chaired by Dr. Freeman Hrabrowski.

The committee issued its recommendations to the Board of Regents last May and asked that I work cooperatively with USM staff to develop a plan to implement the recommendations of the CSU Review Committee. We developed a 50 point implementation plan which the Board of Regents accepted in June and asked that I present a progress report to the Board every 6 months. The Implementation Plan focuses on three primary goals:

1. Increasing student retention and graduation rates
2. Strengthening academic programs
3. Improving financial stability and administrative operations

To date, we have completed 23 of the 50 actions and the remaining 27 are to be completed by June, 2014; which we are on course to do. Several of the accomplishments I just shared are part of this plan.

Our work on this plan has been well received by the USM, BOR and members of the Legislature all of whom have indicated that they are pleased with our efforts advance Coppin.

So, what is on the horizon for CSU?

We face several challenges.

A desire to achieve an enrollment of 5,000 students in 2020 will be an uphill task, but we must address our under-enrollment to have the revenue stream to do innovative things. We face significant competition in recruiting students in the very competitive Baltimore and surrounding areas where we attract 75% of our students.

We have initiated an enrollment strategy which requires an all hands on deck approach. The leader for this effort will be on board soon. We now have the leadership in place to lead our Financial Aid area and we will have more timely packaging and disbursements. We are also employing a marketing firm to assist us in attracting more students. They will get them into CSU and it will be our responsibility to keep them and graduate them. Growing student enrollment is the future lifeline for Coppin and any university for that matter.

We need our Alumni to actively support Coppin!

By returning to your institution, you will be providing some return on our investment in you as well as investing in future generations. Through giving, you can help a student in financial need.

Current Alumni giving is 7%; our goal is 10% and we can grow incrementally, until we reach the 20% level. We can lead the other HBCUs in Maryland. You can provide scholarships and career

counseling. You can be a mentor and career counselor. Recruitment is everybody's business; including yours. Be an event sponsor, with your churches, the clergy has tremendous impact on our families and our youth; adopt a school for Coppin and engage us with your networks. Through your networks, you can identify career opportunities and scholarships. Be a mentor and provide honest feedback. Help our students be the best that they can be.

In closing, I want to ask everyone to endeavor to make Coppin an institution of first choice where we join together to make students our top priority. By working together as a team and embracing change we can successfully re-establish Coppin as a vital provider of higher education throughout our immediate community and the state of Maryland.

We must provide the wind to graduate our students in FOUR and ensure that Coppin will SOAR for years to come.

Thank you and may we have a prosperous and COPPIN PROUD 2014 Homecoming

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