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President Search Committee
Florida Gulf Coast University
Ft. Myers, FL

Dear Search Committee:

Please accept this letter and accompanying curriculum vitae as my application for the position of President at Florida Gulf Coast University. I have the skills, attributes, qualifications, and experience necessary to provide the leadership required to Florida Gulf Coast University in achieving its mission. I would also bring a commitment to engage key stakeholders, students, faculty and staff, business partners, K-12 education partners, and government leaders to create and sustain opportunities for students.

Scholarship

As part of my commitment to the scholarly community and dedication to collaborative inquiry, I regularly present my research at professional conferences. As a result, I have presented numerous times at conferences including some of the following: Keeping Our Faculties of Color Symposium at University of Minnesota and University of Cincinnati Diversity Conference. In general, my research focuses on minority access and achievement in higher education. More specifically my work focuses on issues related to affirmative action, race neutral admissions policies, the African American male achievement gap, as well as the recruitment and retention of students of color in postsecondary education. I have recently developed Latino focus degree programs to address the largest growing population in America. As a faculty member I fought hard to develop a strong, rigorous and challenging curriculum to ensure that students receive a quality education.

Administrator Experience

In my role as Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs, I have had extraordinary opportunities to work with every department within the academic institution, which has enabled a keen understanding of the complexity of the institutional organization, operation enrollment models and diversity of the student population that support education. I have a vast amount of knowledge of curriculum development, traditional & adult education, continuing education, and trends in education. As the Associate Vice President I have oversight for undergraduate and graduate programs. While overseeing the operating budget of approximately \$28 million across 30 education centers in 18 states I have generated over \$50 million in gross revenue. Webster University has 18,500 students worldwide and I am directly responsible for 8,000 students. In addition, I spearheaded the HLC reaccreditation for the extended campuses for Webster University.

In my role as Assistant Dean of Undergraduate Studies I worked directly with faculty, I was responsible for the hiring and their supervision. I believe in building strong relationships with team members and fellow workers, whether equals or superiors. I strongly believe in shared governance and everyone has equal say in my department. I have no doubt that my positive, team-centered attitude, coupled with my constant drive to produce solid results, will provide a constructive advantage to Florida Gulf Coast University. A large part of my responsibility was accreditation, student recruitment, ensuring student retention, promoting academic integrity, marketing & development while working in Academic Affairs. I have also built partnerships with Fortune 500 companies to help increase the profile of my university.

Leadership Experience

I am confident that I can strengthen communication with students, staff, faculty, and the entire community while improving student success, retention and graduation rates. I have a reputation as being a direct, problem-solving, student-centered, innovative leader. I encourage staff to not only look at best practices to develop solutions but also to think creatively and view problems from multiple perspectives. Working with the new generation of students we have to meet them where they are and create a learning environment that fosters school spirit and embraces current traditions. I know a key component to this position is to work with key stakeholders in the community, city and state of Florida. I have developed key relationships in the past from local to federal government and I am well connected in my home state of Florida and Ft. Myers due to growing up there.

I bring a wealth of knowledge in the areas of internship, undergraduate research, and study abroad programs. Webster University has 9 International Campuses that our students regularly rotate in and out to gain experience. Through our WINS program I work with other institutions to send their faculty and students abroad.

In the area of graduate education I have been extremely successful of increasing enrollment in the Business, Education and Management programs at my current institution. I have increased enrollment by 20% in the last academic year while maintaining enrollment retention of 92%. I work closely with the Deans to help develop new programs that the market is calling for and to stay ahead of the curve like Cyber Security. I am equipped to take your institution to the next level and increase revenue, endowment and programs.

I am a product of the Florida Higher Education System with degrees from Bethune Cookman University, Barry University and Nova Southeastern University, so I know the value of higher education in Florida. I would be honored to continue that excellence with Florida Gulf Coast University. I appreciate your consideration and welcome the opportunity to discuss my candidacy.

Sincerely,

Dr. Donnovon Outten