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FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY
PRESIDENTIAL SEARCH COMMITTEE
LISTENING SESSIONS

SESSION 4: AREA/DIVISION LEADERS

Wednesday, April 13, 2022
2:00 P.M. - 3:00 P.M.

Modesto Maidique Campus
Graham Center Ballrooms
11200 Southwest 8th Street
Miami, Florida 33199

Stenographically Reported By:
Aurora C. Sloan, FPR

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APPEARANCES:

FIU University Staff Members:

FIU Board of Trustees Chair Dean Colson

FIU Board of Trustees Vice Chair Roger Tovar

FIU Ombudsperson Sofia Trelles

ALSO PRESENT:

Higher Education Search Consultant William Funk

1 (Whereupon, the following proceedings were
2 had:)

3 MR. TOVAR: Good afternoon. Glad to
4 have you all here.

5 And you may notice or not notice,
6 we've done quite a few of these. So by now
7 I'm off script, because I'm kind of tired
8 of hearing myself speak.

9 But I do want to mention to you all
10 who we have already met with. So we have
11 met with the Faculty Senate twice, once
12 yesterday and again once this morning. We
13 met with the Foundation Board of Directors.
14 We met with the alumni board. We met with
15 the FIU Volunteer Councils. And then we
16 met with student government.

17 And then, just a few minutes ago, we
18 went over time, and I apologize for that,
19 but we met with the executive team.

20 And really all of the comments have
21 been amazing. A lot of them everybody is
22 in agreement with the vision, their passion
23 for FIU. And so you all have a hard act to
24 follow as to the last group because more
25 than anything, and I think everybody up

1 here would agree, I was inspired by a lot
2 of what was said and their comments.

3 I do want to mention we have Eric
4 Eikenberg here, who is also on the search
5 committee, and heads up the Everglades
6 Foundation. So thanks for being here with
7 us today.

8 And I would also, if you already
9 haven't already done it, take a look at the
10 list of people on the search committee.
11 And, you know, I think Dean did a great job
12 trying to get input from different areas of
13 the community. There is a person there
14 from the board of governors; there's a
15 student that's there; there's a number of
16 people from the foundation; a lot of
17 alumni; two past chairs of the board. So
18 there is a good group of people to go out
19 there and work with Mr. Funk as to
20 searching for candidates to propose to the
21 board.

22 We also have the pleasure today to
23 have our Chair of our board with us, Dean
24 Colson. So Dean, thanks for joining us.
25 Good to have you here.

1 And really, what we want to do, and
2 this started out as a listening session,
3 but it's kind of become just dialogue back
4 and forth as you to all's ideas, our,
5 hopefully, responses or agreement to your
6 ideas. So whatever you'd like to say, we'd
7 like to hear it.

8 Bill, what would you?

9 MR. FUNK: Simply to piggyback on what
10 Roger has said, this has really been a
11 conversation of sorts as opposed to a
12 listening session. It's an opportunity for
13 you to ask the board questions. These are
14 the folks that make the machine go.

15 I'd also, though, like for you to keep
16 in mind the three questions that I think we
17 had posted and most of you have seen. But
18 essentially, you know, we'd like to hear
19 your thoughts about what you perceive to be
20 the major challenges and opportunities that
21 this next president will inherit, both
22 immediately and maybe longer term.

23 Secondly, if those are the challenges
24 and opportunities, what kind of person do
25 you think is best prepared to address the

1 challenges and exploit the opportunities?
2 What adjectives would you use to describe
3 the ideal candidate's experience,
4 leadership style, personality, world view?
5 You know, what kind of person really could
6 come in and continue this wonderful ascent
7 that you have experienced over the past
8 decade?

9 And then, finally, what would be
10 helpful to me as the search consultant, I
11 will be the one contacting the individuals
12 who haven't even thought about making a
13 change. We think, most of the time, those
14 are the individuals who are the best
15 candidates. They are very successful where
16 they are, they haven't thought about making
17 a move. So we have to talk to those
18 individuals and articulate to them what we
19 call in a high-faluting way a scenario of
20 attractability, but essentially, what can
21 we tell them about FIU that will make them
22 excited about coming into our pool and
23 considering the opportunity?

24 So if you can, in our conversation,
25 share some of that with us.

1 There is a court stenographer in the
2 back. You won't see us furiously taking
3 notes because we want to maintain eye
4 contact and listen intently and that's why
5 we have someone in the back who's writing
6 down everything that's said. It's also
7 being recorded.

8 So we appreciate a candid
9 conversation, and we really want to hear
10 what you have to share with us today.

11 The challenge is always who goes
12 first. Nobody wants to go first it sounds
13 like -- seems like. But who would like to,
14 maybe, respond to any of these questions or
15 have something that you'd like to share
16 with us?

17 We do have members of the search
18 committee with us and this is a great
19 opportunity for you to express your views
20 about the next president.

21 MS. TRELLES: I also would like to
22 share that we do have approximately 30
23 individuals who are joining us through our
24 virtual platform.

25 If anybody has any comments or

1 questions that they would like to add,
2 please use the technology available so that
3 we can hear your unique voice.

4 We also wanted to thank the deans that
5 are in attendance today. We know that you
6 are a critical component to this
7 conversation as well. So, thank you.

8 MR. TOVAR: The other thing I was
9 going to introduce was to mention that
10 Trustee Hrinak, I believe, is online. So
11 she's joining us today. Dr. Butchey, who
12 is also in the search committee, she's here
13 with us today. So just to acknowledge --
14 who just got elected as the head of the
15 Faculty Senate; so again, congratulations.

16 Dean?

17 MR. COLSON: So I'd like to say to the
18 deans, you know, I have spent some time
19 with some of you. Brian is back there and,
20 you know, I try to -- he comes up with
21 crazy ideas and, you know, he reels me in
22 and I go to meetings with him. But I don't
23 meet with all the deans.

24 And the other day I was talking to
25 Mori Hosseini, who's the chair of the

1 University of Florida, and he said he just
2 met with his deans. And I said, what did
3 you meet with your deans about? And he
4 said, I meet with them every semester. And
5 I said, really? I said, I don't.

6 And I'm thinking -- and I said -- and
7 you know, it's kind of out of respect for
8 the pecking order. I don't want to
9 micromanage. I got a president, I got a
10 provost I deal with, and I don't get down
11 and have meetings with the deans unless
12 it's a specific project that somebody wants
13 me to go help them with, and Roger doesn't
14 either.

15 And so to the extent we want to use
16 this time to either talk about things you
17 are concerned about, or to the extent that
18 you think I ought to be meeting with you,
19 I'm happy to meet with you. I enjoy
20 meeting with faculty, I enjoy meeting with
21 Faculty Senate.

22 And to the extent the trustees can be
23 of greater service to you, that's great. I
24 just try to -- you know, there's this fine
25 line that we're not supposed to cross and

1 it's not always that well defined. So I
2 try not to cross that line.

3 So I'm delighted to be here with
4 everybody.

5 MR. TOVAR: Again, I'll tell that you
6 I'm thrilled because I've been in business
7 long enough that I've been told that I've
8 been cursed with a look that I'm a mean
9 person, that I look mean.

10 So this gives us the ability to
11 interact a little bit and hopefully you all
12 will see that that's not the case.

13 And, you know, we're looking forward
14 to you all's input and it's important to
15 hear from you all as to what you think is
16 important, where you think the challenges
17 are. Because at the end, we're going to go
18 out there searching based on a lot of the
19 comments that we've gotten.

20 And I'll give you a little summary of
21 some of the things we hear. We've heard
22 that the person that's going to lead this
23 university forward can't be jaded from an
24 internal person or someone from South
25 Florida, we need to bring someone from the

1 outside. And the very next session,
2 somebody who didn't hear that session, we
3 said we really need somebody from the
4 inside that understands this institution
5 and understands South Florida. So you can
6 imagine what we need to balance here.

7 But my view of the world -- and what's
8 great is the committee that we have, that
9 we have 15 different views that then
10 proposed to the board that these are the
11 two, three, or five candidates that we
12 think would be good to consider for the
13 next president, and then from there it goes
14 to the board of governors. But really
15 there's so many boxes to check.

16 This is such a large institution.
17 There's 56, 57,000 students, there's 12,
18 14,000 faculty and staff. We happen to be
19 a public university in Miami, one of the --
20 to me the best city in this country, if not
21 the world, to be in right now with the
22 growth that we have, with the diversity
23 that we have, with the challenges that we
24 have.

25 And then the role that us as a

1 university play in Miami. And then how do
2 we tell our story within Miami for people
3 to really recognize and understand what
4 goes on here? That the university has a
5 \$1.7 billion budget, that we do \$250
6 million worth of research, that we're
7 aspiring to do 400 million here soon. And
8 then all of the satellite locations and
9 places.

10 And as I have mentioned in many of
11 these meetings, just yesterday we
12 inaugurated our Center for Translational
13 Sciences up in Port St. Lucie. And then
14 you see the botany center that is being
15 built in Coconut Grove. And then you see
16 the research that we are doing down in the
17 Keys. So I can go on and on and on.

18 And how do we better -- I'll put this
19 out there to you all. How do we better
20 utilize the North Miami campus? How do we
21 structure programs there better so that
22 students don't need to be going back and
23 forth and fully utilize the on-campus
24 housing that we said we needed?

25 And so there's many things that -- we

1 can call them challenges, again, without
2 getting into the challenges, opportunity
3 word game, but there's things that need to
4 be looked at.

5 You know, we're a Division 1 athletic
6 school and so we have a new athletic
7 director, who just walked out of the room,
8 and we have a new coach. And one of the
9 things that Dean mentions and I reiterate
10 is we need to be relevant in whatever we
11 do. And so, whatever we do, we need to do
12 it to its fullest.

13 And then we have the issues -- and
14 it's really not issues, but we have a
15 reality as to how we are funded, and a lot
16 of our funding comes from the state. But
17 I'll also tell you, and I think Dean would
18 echo this, is we're very grateful as to
19 what the legislature has done for us in the
20 last few years. And, you know, some of the
21 recurring funding, because it's one thing
22 to get a pot of money today, it's another
23 thing to get the commitment that that money
24 will continue from here on out. But then
25 how do we utilize it? And how does that

1 fit into the mission that we have?

2 So I'm kind of filling in time here to
3 give somebody the opportunity.

4 Dean, go ahead.

5 DR. HEITHAUS: Okay. I'll take you
6 off the hook and do what I promised myself
7 I wouldn't do, which is go first.

8 And I'm sure you heard a lot on
9 challenges and opportunities, so I'll just
10 kind of try to talk off the top of my head
11 a little bit here and set things up for the
12 rest.

13 But I think that we need somebody who,
14 first and foremost, is deeply concerned
15 with impact which, I think, gets to your
16 point about being relevant in anything we
17 do. Because I think that that view of
18 having the biggest impact we can have cuts
19 across whether you are coming from the
20 outside, whether you are internal, and the
21 ability to look across all the programs we
22 have.

23 I think with that, we definitely need
24 somebody who is an incredible communicator
25 with a vision on how to communicate, and

1 project a vision for who we are and what we
2 are about as an institution. And I think
3 that has to be coupled with an incredibly
4 high bar for where we need to be, because
5 we aren't well known. So we have to be
6 better than everybody else. We have to be
7 different than everybody else because just
8 like everyone else is going to keep us
9 where we are.

10 Because when I tend to look at a lot
11 of our programs, we have the excellence we
12 need in a lot of places. What we don't
13 necessarily have, I think, is two things.

14 One, is that kind of national,
15 international gravitas with somebody who
16 comes out there that really let's people
17 know what we are doing and they remember
18 where that person is from. Because I can't
19 tell you how many times I'm out there and I
20 hear, somebody will repeat what we are
21 doing, they can't remember where it was.
22 And so I think a leader can help you have
23 that recall for where that was done.

24 I think the other thing is we need
25 somebody who is a bit of a systems thinker

1 and able to look across disciplines
2 incredibly well. Because another thing we
3 have is excellence that's kind of
4 vulcanized into different areas. And
5 someone at the presidential level that has
6 good concept of what's going on across the
7 institution, when they are in a situation
8 that demands that, they can pull up right
9 away where the relevance is for the
10 institution, whether that's in Tallahassee
11 talking about what we need to do policy
12 wise, funding wise, whether it's at a major
13 conference, or just out in the community.
14 And I think that being able to pull
15 together all those right pieces across the
16 university is really important.

17 And so I think that means you have to
18 have someone who is very curious and is
19 going to have a growth mindset, because
20 this institution isn't what it was two
21 years ago. It's not going to be what it is
22 now two years from now. And so you have to
23 have a leader that's going to be able to,
24 kind of, continually learn, understand
25 where the institution is going, and adapt

1 to the times that we face, because I don't
2 suspect Florida is going to get any less
3 entertaining in the challenges or
4 opportunities we face.

5 And you need somebody who's kind of
6 flexible and able to duck and weave and
7 really can unite the, kind of, admin/ops
8 side of the house, the academic side of the
9 house, athletics, and really pull it all
10 together in that one vision for what we're
11 going to be, because I'm sure I don't need
12 to repeat what a lot of people have already
13 said about the real opportunities of who we
14 are, what we are. We are the future of
15 what it should be.

16 And so the next president also has to
17 be deeply thinking about and not reacting
18 to what's going on, but actually blazing
19 the path to what higher ed, public higher
20 ed must be in the future to be relevant to
21 our communities locally and globally.

22 MR. TOVAR: Dean, do you want to add
23 anything to that?

24 MR. COLSON: No. I agree. I agree
25 with everything he just said. And you said

1 it with great enthusiasm.

2 MR. TOVAR: And Dr. Heithaus, you
3 know --

4 DR. HEITHAUS: We bleed blue and gold.

5 MR. COLSON: That's right.

6 MR. TOVAR: And that's what I was
7 going to say, it's amazing what you do and
8 the passion and dedication that you have,
9 and even your participation in the
10 marketing, advertising sessions. And I
11 always love hearing you speak, and so thank
12 you. Thank you for those comments.

13 DR. HEITHAUS: Well, thank you to all
14 the search committee. It's a big job and
15 critically important. So thanks to
16 everyone here and those that are going to
17 be doing a lot of work over the next few
18 weeks.

19 MR. TOVAR: We will. We will.

20 Yes.

21 DR. ANDREWS: Hello. Good afternoon.

22 Charlie Andrews, I'm the Interim
23 Vice-President for Student Affairs and I
24 just have a couple of things that come to
25 mind.

1 One, I think -- actually both of them
2 I echo off of what Dean Heithaus just
3 mentioned. But one, I think not so much
4 about being from here or from Miami, but
5 understanding the space and place that we
6 occupy being in South Florida, I do think
7 is important.

8 Two pieces of that, being both an
9 urban-serving university and a
10 Hispanic-serving institution, really
11 understanding what the word "serving" means
12 in both of those. It's not just about
13 demographics and numbers, but what does it
14 truly mean to serve our community and to
15 serve our particular student population.

16 So I think that someone who can
17 articulate that, I think, would be really
18 important, because I feel like that's a
19 huge part of our identity as an
20 institution, and a huge part of what other
21 universities ask us about and look to us to
22 talk about when we're being asked about the
23 success that we've been having with our
24 students. So I think that's really
25 critical.

1 And then the other piece I think is,
2 we probably have a lot to learn from what
3 some other institutions are doing. So
4 somebody who brings ideas, but is not boxed
5 into, this is the way FIU has always done
6 it, this is the way someone else does it,
7 because one of my favorite things about
8 working here for 23 years is the innovative
9 spirit that we bring to things. And so we
10 can try things that maybe nobody else has
11 tried before. So I feel like it has to be
12 a balance between learning from what other
13 people may have done, but also thinking
14 outside the box and being innovative,
15 because I really do think that's, kind of,
16 helped put FIU on the map.

17 MR. TOVAR: Thank you.

18 And I know serving has to be the calls
19 you get at three in the morning; right?

20 So congratulations in your new job and
21 your new position. Thank you.

22 Dr. Schriener?

23 DR. SCHRINER: Good afternoon.

24 I would agree with what Dr. Heithaus
25 and Dr. Andrews said.

1 My name is Brian Schriner. I'm the
2 Dean of the College of Communication,
3 Architecture & The Arts. I've been at FIU
4 since 1988.

5 I'd like to see us look for a
6 candidate with a proven track record of
7 identifying, nurturing, and evaluating
8 talent.

9 The new president, she or he, will
10 have a strong voice in the provost. There
11 are several deans that are interim or will
12 be retiring soon. I would just like to see
13 -- make sure that we find someone who has a
14 track record of understanding what those
15 positions mean.

16 And we really have an opportunity to
17 either propel the university forward, keep
18 it the same, or go backwards given that
19 there is so many leadership positions that
20 would be available that he or she would
21 have an impact in. So I just think that's
22 an important criteria.

23 It could be a real draw, and I would
24 imagine it is, for candidates to come and
25 say, okay, I have an opportunity to make

1 significant change. But at the same time,
2 it could be high-risk because there will be
3 a lot of change potentially happening at
4 the same time.

5 MR. TOVAR: How long have you been
6 here at FIU?

7 DR. SCHRINER: '88. I know I look
8 much younger. 1988.

9 MR. TOVAR: Just got here, huh?

10 DR. SCHRINER: Just got here. Feels
11 like it. Every day is a new day.

12 MR. TOVAR: But again, that's the
13 story of FIU. And again always enjoy the
14 interaction with you and appreciate what
15 you do.

16 DR. SCHRINER: Well, thank you. Same.

17 MR. TOVAR: Good comments.

18 Bill?

19 MR. COLSON: I would agree. I mean,
20 we are going to make some major hires here
21 in the next 18 months. We're going to have
22 a new president, you are going to do
23 searches and have some new senior people
24 and, you know, we can't -- the industry
25 average is 50 percent success --

1 DR. SCHRINER: We can't do that.

2 MR. COLSON: -- we can't do that --

3 DR. SCHRINER: Right.

4 MR. COLSON: -- and shame on us if we
5 do. So I agree with you completely.

6 DR. SCHRINER: And for public record,
7 they are not crazy ideas. They are
8 innovative ideas.

9 You had said "crazy idea."

10 MR. COLSON: Oh, yeah. Some of them
11 are a little crazy.

12 DR. SCHRINER: Less innovative.

13 MR. TOVAR: And I think you mentioned
14 there is a number of positions that are
15 interim right now. And I think it's the
16 right thing to do to leave those position
17 interim until we hire a president, and let
18 the new president create her or his team as
19 to how to move forward with the
20 institution. Because I believe, every time
21 you hire a new president, you are kind of
22 turning to a new chapter and envisioning
23 the future and strategizing how do we go
24 forward?

25 So I think we're in an amazing place.

1 I think what you all have done over these
2 few years that you've been here is truly --
3 I don't think there's too many universities
4 that have grown this way and have
5 accomplished what FIU has accomplished in
6 50 years. And it truly is amazing. It's
7 only been 50 years. But I think we can
8 even grow that much quicker.

9 And when I say growth, I don't
10 necessarily mean that we're doubling our
11 student body, but there's still much more
12 growth as to what we do, how we do it.

13 We have a -- and I've mentioned this
14 in a number of the meetings, we have a
15 very, very young medical school. I'm glad
16 to see that what I believe is finally
17 getting the medical school, the nursing
18 school, the school of public health, and
19 now our research down in Port St. Lucie,
20 people are starting to talk and collaborate
21 and work together, and I would encourage
22 all of us to do that. So all good things.

23 Who else?

24 MS. GARCIA: Good afternoon.

25 Breny Garcia, I'm the Associate

1 Vice-President for Student Health and
2 Wellness.

3 Prior to this I spent 15 years in the
4 office of the president serving both
5 President Maidique and President Rosenberg.

6 My comments revolve really around
7 student support services, and I think it's
8 something that we could have been doing a
9 lot better the last 25 years, in my
10 personal experience working with both of
11 them.

12 Just this morning Inside Higher Ed
13 released an opinion piece called, What
14 Keeps Presidents Up At Night? And one of
15 the quotes talks about "turning away and
16 hoping for the best will be to our peril.
17 Rather we must prepare our institutions to
18 be student ready."

19 In my opinion, I think that this new
20 president, certainly building the proper
21 leadership team to help him or her do this,
22 because it's not solely on their shoulders,
23 but really needs to understand the
24 importance of student support services,
25 everything from academic advising to

1 counseling to campus life and how that
2 contributes to not only student success,
3 but also the overall well-being of
4 students; right?

5 So in my department, we follow the
6 nine dimensions of wellness model. And
7 wellness isn't about your physical and
8 mental health. It's about environmental
9 health, financial wellness, occupational
10 wellness, all of these things need to work
11 together in order to create successful
12 students when they cross the graduation
13 stage and be contributing members of
14 society.

15 So while we are an R1 institution and
16 the research enterprise is of utmost
17 importance and fundraising and athletics,
18 which I fully support, somebody that also
19 brings to the table that knowledge and that
20 understanding, that without those support
21 offices, we won't be able to fully move
22 forward our student success metrics.

23 Thank you.

24 MR. TOVAR: Where would you grade that
25 we're at today as far as that?

1 MS. GARCIA: There's so many
2 departments. Some are better than others.

3 I would say overall, like a C plus.

4 MR. TOVAR: And so what if -- and I
5 always say this, the low hanging fruit,
6 what would you say is something that we
7 could attack that would make the biggest
8 impact? and that's doable?

9 MS. GARCIA: Some of the things I've
10 already -- I've been tuning into the other
11 sessions, so they have already been raised,
12 but obviously funding these services is our
13 biggest challenge, which I recognize, and
14 with dropping enrollments and changing
15 priorities at the state level, that will be
16 our biggest challenge.

17 So somebody that maybe understands
18 creative ways to work with whoever -- you
19 know, whether it's the interim CFO or the
20 future permanent CFO and their team, to be
21 able to properly fund these departments;
22 everything from pay wage increases to
23 actually properly funding programs.

24 Like, for example, the student health
25 fee is enrollment based. If enrollment

1 drops, our budget drops. So I have to
2 figure out, how am I going to fund these
3 very necessary programs? Other auxiliaries
4 have similar challenges.

5 So things like that that trying to
6 bring their business acumen in with just
7 their acknowledgment of how important these
8 services are for our students, and working
9 together with whatever the future
10 leadership team becomes, I think, is going
11 to be very important for our student body.

12 MR. COLSON: Is career services under
13 your umbrella?

14 MS. GARCIA: Under mine? No.

15 MR. COLSON: Where does that fall?

16 MS. GARCIA: Charlie, is that under
17 you? There has been a lot of reorganizing,
18 Trustee Colson, so I'm not sure.

19 Bridgette Cram, our interim
20 vice-president. She was on the executive
21 committee.

22 MR. COLSON: Okay.

23 MR. TOVAR: Okay. Thank you. Thank
24 you.

25 MR. FUNK: Do we have comments?

1 MS. TRELLES: We do.

2 So someone just emailed me a comment,
3 so I want to make sure that I read it.

4 So this message comes from Phillip
5 Lloyd Hamilton, who is the Assistant
6 Vice-President for Student Access and
7 Success.

8 Please excuse my physical absence as I
9 am currently at FIU in DC with our Black
10 Student Union for their fly-in.

11 As the central representative of many
12 hidden populations within our student body,
13 including students with foster care
14 histories, those experiencing housing
15 insecurities, first generation students,
16 and others, it is vital that our next
17 president embrace the needs of these
18 students and the responsibility that the
19 university accepted years ago to see and
20 support them.

21 Also, FIU, like Miami, has many
22 identities. As we embrace our identity as
23 a Hispanic-serving institution, we still
24 enroll more black students than most
25 historically black colleges and

1 universities.

2 Our commitment to making FIU a place
3 where this is a key population feel that
4 they belong and can excel is as important
5 as our HSI culture.

6 Additionally, our responsibility to
7 Miami-Dade and Broward Counties to lean in
8 and support our local school districts has
9 become a part of the university's DNA.

10 Our next president needs to understand
11 our responsibility to help uplift our
12 community while still improving our
13 academic and research reputation, not at
14 the expense of it.

15 MR. TOVAR: That was a lot.

16 I think there was three points in
17 there. The first one was housing.

18 Can you repeat the first one?

19 MS. TRELLES: Of course.

20 As the central representative of many
21 hidden populations within our student body,
22 including the students with foster care
23 histories, those experiencing housing
24 insecurities, first generation students and
25 others, it is vital that our next president

1 embrace the needs of these students and the
2 responsibility that the university accepted
3 years ago to see and to support them.

4 MR. TOVAR: Well, on that point,
5 that's a very interesting point because
6 there's a state representative, and I
7 forget the exact area that she covers, her
8 name is Representative Marie Woodson, and
9 that's something that is near and dear to
10 her heart. And that was -- I don't know if
11 there was anybody in this room, but we had
12 had, I believe, it was two conference calls
13 with President Rosenberg and with her, and
14 she was trying to create some innovative
15 ways to create funding for that, outside of
16 what we're already doing, which is --
17 what's the program called Panthers.

18 MS. TRELLES: Fostering Panther Pride.

19 MR. TOVAR: Fostering Panthers pride.

20 So there is already a program for it.
21 I don't think there's enough funding there.
22 I think there's still more to do there.
23 But I would ask whoever is bringing that
24 out to reach out to me, and I'll try to
25 reconnect with Representative Woodson, and

1 then I'll try to put it on the forefront
2 for our next president.

3 But it truly is -- there's an issue
4 there, and there shouldn't be anyone that's
5 homeless, but we definitely don't want
6 anyone that's within the FIU community
7 that's trying to better themselves to be
8 sleeping in a car or be homeless,
9 especially somebody coming out of the
10 foster care program.

11 So I'd like to engage with this person
12 and understand better their point of view.

13 And then what was the second point?

14 MS. TRELLES: Of course.

15 Also, FIU, like Miami, has many
16 identities. As we embrace our identity as
17 a Hispanic-serving institution, we still
18 enroll more black students than most
19 historically black colleges and
20 universities.

21 Our commitment to making FIU a place
22 where this key population feels that they
23 belong and can excel is as important as our
24 HSI culture.

25 MR. TOVAR: And again, I think we have

1 discussed this in other meetings. If you
2 look at the percentage, not just the
3 numbers, but then the percentage of
4 enrollment, I believe within the 12
5 universities in the state, I think as a
6 percentage of student body, we are the
7 third highest percentage of black students
8 as to full enrollment.

9 As to the issue of belonging and the
10 concern of belonging, it's been brought up
11 to me numerous times, I've discussed it
12 with some people already in the
13 administration, and I would assure this
14 person that, number one, to keep talking
15 about it; and number two, that we have a
16 commitment that we want everyone to feel
17 like they belong here. And so it's
18 something that we need to work on. We
19 can't just say, well, it doesn't exist. We
20 need to address it and work on it. So
21 again, point well taken.

22 And then the third point?

23 MS. TRELLES: Of course.

24 The last portion of this comment is:

25 Additionally, our responsibility to

1 Miami-Dade and Broward Counties to lean in
2 and support our local school districts has
3 become part of the university's DNA.

4 Our next president needs to understand
5 our responsibility to help uplift our
6 community while still improving our
7 academic and research reputation, not at
8 the expense of it.

9 MR. TOVAR: Dean, do you want to take
10 that one?

11 MR. COLSON: Well --

12 MR. TOVAR: I'll take it.

13 MR. COLSON: No. No.

14 I think that the relationship with our
15 school system is critically important. And
16 I think these questions are all kind of
17 tied together, and it's a -- we need a
18 place that can serve the black student body
19 and the Dade County public school system --
20 and the whole student body of the Dade
21 County Public School system, and we need to
22 make this place a place where everybody
23 feels comfortable. And that's going to
24 require more people housing on campus, and
25 that's going to require money.

1 We're going to need -- you know, I've
2 talked a lot, this is beyond just the
3 foster care problem. But we're at
4 12 percent of the student body, the
5 community is 15 or 16 percent black. How
6 do we close that gap?

7 Well, you are going to probably have
8 to provide some housing. And if you don't
9 provide the housing, you are probably not
10 going to close the gap. You are also going
11 to probably have to start recruiting in the
12 public school system earlier. I mean, I
13 understand we're going to lose some of
14 those kids to UCF, and some of the best
15 kids Florida, but there a lot of good kids
16 here that we can get here. And we need to
17 pay more attention and spend more time at
18 Miami-Dade, and to recruit those kids.

19 But at the end of the day, we're also
20 going to have to provide some housing
21 money, because it's not enough just to
22 provide tuition and fees. We are going to
23 have to provide some housing money. And
24 where are we going to get that money? I
25 think we are probably going to have to

1 raise the money. It's going to be a
2 philanthropy problem, and that's what we
3 are going to have to do.

4 MS. TRELLES: Thank you for that.

5 I do want to share that, as our time
6 does come to an end, that if you have any
7 questions or comments that you would like
8 to share, to please make sure to utilize
9 our virtual platform so that we do have
10 them. And we will make sure that the
11 Presidential Search Committee, as well as
12 the search firm, have access to those
13 comments and questions.

14 MR. FUNK: And before we end the
15 session, I'd really like to appeal to you
16 to talk to your colleagues, not only
17 internal to the university, but also your
18 colleagues and other institutions around
19 the country. When you go to conferences,
20 you are working together on various
21 projects, ask those individuals who on
22 their campuses might be a good candidate
23 for our presidency.

24 And if you will share that name, if
25 you get a name, just send it to us, our

1 contact information will be in the ad that
2 you will see very soon, and also in the
3 leadership statement that will be posted on
4 the university website, the presidential
5 search website.

6 But really, help us build the pool.
7 This is another way you can participate in
8 the search, and we promise you that we'll
9 contact each and every person that's
10 nominated and try to bring them into active
11 candidacy.

12 MR. TOVAR: Yes, we do. We do.

13 MS. PADRON: Laura Padron, Associate
14 Vice-President at the FIU Foundation for
15 Development.

16 So I just wanted to jump on Dean
17 Colson, you ended with it's going to take
18 philanthropy.

19 So I'm sure you've heard, I had the
20 good fortune of working with these amazing
21 and sometimes crazy deans in raising money.

22 MR. COLSON: I'm going to hear about
23 that for a long time.

24 MS. PADRON: So I think this person,
25 to use Brian's words, also to have that

1 track record of success navigating
2 political, economic, and philanthropic
3 communities, locally, of course at the
4 state, national, and globally. Because
5 that is where FIU is just on the edge of
6 being there.

7 Whether you call it Silicone Beach,
8 Digital Beach, whatever it is, the influx
9 of not just the tech movement, but physical
10 movement of northeast, there is money here.
11 And to have an influencer who is toe-to-toe
12 and a business-minded person to create
13 those solid partnerships and funding
14 opportunities and leverage those
15 relationships and that influence in those
16 circles to make those crazy ideas happen.

17 MR. COLSON: I want to tell you, I
18 think Brian Schriener is one of the most
19 innovative people I have ever met. And
20 I'll go on any trip with him to go raise
21 money for one of his crazy ideas.

22 But I also think that the whole
23 concept that we -- and we had a speaker say
24 this last session, to have excellence and
25 equity are not mutually exclusively. We

1 can have both, we can demand both, we can
2 expect both, make awesome money, but that's
3 our job to go get it. And so we need a
4 president that understands that.

5 MR. TOVAR: Laura, and to echo that
6 also, because Howard took up half the
7 meeting last hour, and so we heard his view
8 of the world as to fundraising and
9 everything else, but it is very important.

10 But I think that will come if we have
11 the right leader that is in place that can
12 pick up the phone and somebody is going to
13 answer his or her call; that he or she asks
14 to go to lunch with somebody, and that they
15 will go to lunch. And then that they have
16 the ability to tell the story as to what
17 we're doing here. And then that has the
18 ability to, instead of asking for
19 \$1 million, ask for \$100 million, because I
20 think sometimes we short-change ourselves.

21 And there is a lot of funding out
22 there. But we got to work on building the
23 affinity to the university, and there's
24 many ways to go about it. I'll give you
25 one short example.

1 To me, the museum that we have here --
2 I like art, I like visiting museums. We
3 don't have the largest museum. But I think
4 we have, to me, a museum that you go in
5 there, and it's wow. It feels right. It's
6 nice.

7 How do we use the museum to build
8 affinity? How do we use athletics to build
9 affinity? What do we do with our alumni
10 that are throughout South Florida to bring
11 them back? Because when you meet an
12 alumni, rarely do you hear, my experience
13 there was horrible. Generally, you are
14 going to hear, I had a great experience, I
15 love FIU. So why haven't you been back on
16 campus? So how do we connect with them?

17 And then I think if you look at any
18 university that's doing a great job
19 fundraising is because they have that
20 affinity. And it takes all these pieces.
21 It's not only the president's job, but it's
22 all these moving pieces and to get them all
23 to work collectively together.

24 So point well taken, and we're all
25 onboard. So thank you. Thank you for

1 those comments.

2 Do we have any other comments or
3 recommendations, suggestions?

4 Because speaking on behalf of the
5 search committee, on behalf of the board,
6 really appreciate what everyone does. It's
7 easy what we do, which is come up here and
8 talk and then walk away and go do our other
9 things. But we do have a passion about
10 what you all do here and what this
11 university means to the community and how
12 it can make a difference.

13 But again, we invite you all to tell
14 any one of the folks on the search
15 committee, reach out to Bill if you got
16 names, you have suggestions, if you think
17 we're doing it right, we're doing it wrong,
18 and I think every one of us will welcome
19 everyone's points of view.

20 So thank you very much. Thank you.

21 MR. FUNK: You bet. Thank you.

22 (Thereupon, the proceedings were
23 adjourned at 3:00 p.m.)

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CERTIFICATE

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STATE OF FLORIDA)
COUNTY OF MIAMI-DADE)

I, Aurora C. Sloan, Registered Professional
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certify that I was authorized to and did
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and complete record of my stenographic notes.

Dated this 18th day of April, 2022.



Aurora C. Sloan, Florida Professional Reporter

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