



Southern University System NEWSWIRE

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A Message from SU System Board Chairman Antonio "Tony" M. Clayton

The Southern University System has served the people of Louisiana for over 130 years. Throughout our history we have overcome many challenges in order to do so. Today, as the need for Historically Black Universities is in question, we face perhaps our greatest challenge. We are simultaneously confronted with deep budget cuts, increased competition for our traditional enrollment base and the need to transition to a globally competitive institution of higher learning.

Our job is twofold. First, we must adjust our budget to the fiscal realities. This will occur during the July and August Board meetings. Tomorrow, Dr. Lomotey will make a presentation and recommendations on "rightsizing" SUBR. In August, Dr. Mason will make a similar presentation and recommendations with respect to the System office. In August, I will also make recommendations concerning the board office.

The second component of our job is to begin the process of regeneration; to transform the Southern University System into a next generation Historically Black University and a learning model for higher education nationally. Hiring Dr. Mason and enabling him to attract the talent we need to get the job done is part of that process.

Make no mistake, our task will be arduous. We will save as many as possible, and hire more as we rebuild, but now we have difficult work to do. People's lives, and the lives of their families, will be affected. Our friends will share our pain and our enemies will use that pain to fuel the fires of discontent.

However, for the sake of our future we must persevere. We are the only Historically Black System of higher learning in the nation. We are the largest black institution in the state of Louisiana. We have a responsibility to our students, the state, and the nation to help build a better world.

We will meet the challenges head on. We will overcome. We will accept our responsibility to secure the future of the great institution that we all love, **Southern University.**