

Dear Friend of USF;

Happy New Year! The start of 2013 also marks the kickoff of the Government Relations Newsletter, Volume 3. You may recall that the 2012 Legislative Session started much earlier than normal (in January 2012) due to the once-a-decade process of redrawing the state's electoral districts. The 2013 Legislative Session will return to the normal calendar with Session beginning on the first Tuesday after March 1st (March 5, 2013) and scheduled to conclude 60 days later (on Friday May 3, 2013) as prescribed by Article 3 of Florida's Constitution.

Although the official Legislative Session will not begin until March, the Legislature returns to Tallahassee this week—and for four of the following six weeks—to begin their pre-Session work in committees and subcommittees. So the higher education policy and spending debates of 2013 will begin to take shape over the next few weeks.

One of those important debates was initiated in December by the presidents and student body presidents of all of Florida's state universities with the launch of the Aim Higher campaign. Aim Higher is designed to place additional focus on the need for the state to reinvest in state universities and their students to increase access and quality. The Great Recession caused a reduction of nearly 40 percent in funds that the state allocates for annual university operations from sales tax receipts and other state sources. Some—but not all—of that reduction in state investment in universities has been made up by the students and their families through historically high tuition increases.

Despite these fiscal challenges, the USF System continues to admit and graduate record numbers of students, increase our research profile, and ramp up our numbers of graduates with degrees in the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) fields that are so important for Florida's long-term economic vitality. The chart below gives you snapshot of what the USF System has been able to accomplish over this time period with dramatically less funding from the state and less funding overall.



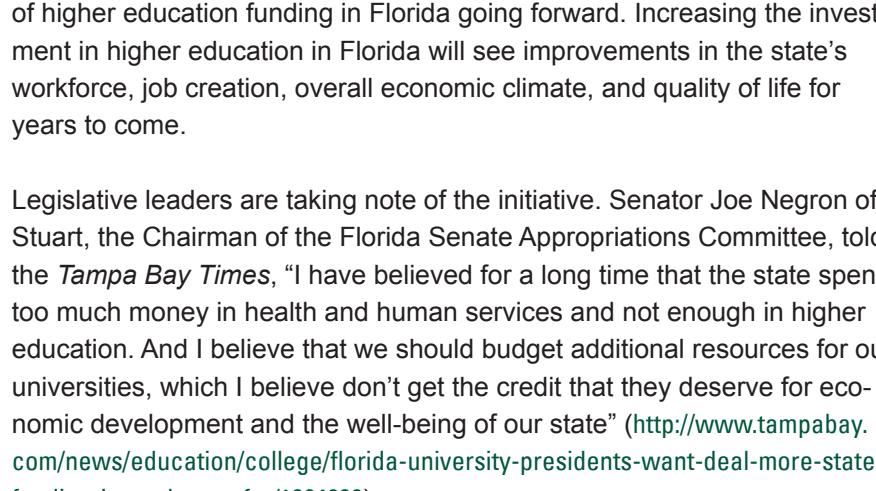
However, the university presidents and student body presidents believe strongly that an improving economic picture now allows the state to reinvest more tax proceeds into state universities, thereby keeping tuition more affordable. The 2012-13 school year marked the first in our state's history that students and their families contributed more to their education through tuition and fees than the state provided to support their education. The presidents of the institutions have all agreed that in exchange for an additional investment of \$118 million in new state funds, the institutions will not seek a tuition increase for the 2013-14 school year. Please see the article below to learn much more about the Aim Higher campaign and how you can follow along and have your voice heard in asking the Governor and the Legislature to reinvest in the State University System in 2013.

And please remember to send us your feedback at govrelations@usf.edu as we take your comments seriously in preparing this newsletter for you.

Wishing you and your family a great 2013. Go Bulls!

Mark Walsh

Assistant VP for Government Relations for the USF System



President Judy Genshaft Joins Aim Higher Initiative

On December 5, 2012, all of the State University System (SUS) presidents and student body presidents traveled to Tallahassee to host a press conference in the Capitol Rotunda to introduce their Aim Higher initiative.

Aim Higher, initially conceived by student leaders, essentially asks the Florida Legislature and Governor Scott to make a \$118 million investment in state universities this year on top of the restoration of the \$300 million one-time, nonrecurring reduction to university budgets taken by the 2012 Legislature. The funding would assist universities in their ability to continue to provide a quality education to students without increasing the financial burden on those students or their families.