



Notes From The President

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January 6, 2011

Dear VSU Faculty and Staff,

As we all know, Valdosta State University is fortunate to have a close relationship with the local community. Whether providing scholarship support or internships, residents of the region are clear partners in our mission.

As a State University, our connection to the community is much deeper than is immediately apparent. *Taxpayers* fund approximately half of the cost to educate a Valdosta State graduate. With financial support comes policy guidance. The original charter of the Trustees of the University of Georgia was embodied in a 1785 Act of the General Assembly and modified in 1931 to include reference to the State System of which we are part. Under the act, Regents are appointed by the Governor with a charge to provide for the "government, control, and management of the University System of Georgia and each of its institutions." Their voice is expressed most directly through the Chancellor and his/her staff. The voice flows through university presidents and the shared governance process of each institution. The responsibility is substantial in light of the System budget of over 2.3 billion dollars.

It is also substantial because of the importance of the mission. No single entity in the State of Georgia evokes passion equal to '*Bulldog*', '*Yellow Jacket*', and '*Blazer*' spirit. No promise for the intellectual, technical, and economic future of the State of Georgia rivals the promise fulfilled by the state's Universities.

I am very pleased to announce that for the first time in recent history, a citizen of Lowndes County and member of the VSU family has been selected to the University System of Georgia Board of Regents. Regent *Rutledge* Griffin, past chairman and chief executive officer of Griffin LLC, has achieved this distinction. He is a remarkable individual who serves in the very best interests of higher education. He is a great friend and will be a great advocate.

Regent Griffin is not new to public service and advocacy. He serves as co-chair of the capital campaign for the Boys and Girls Club of Valdosta, and has served on the Georgia Ports Authority. He is an Emeritus Trustee of the University of Georgia, and is past chairman of the South Georgia Fellowship of Christian Athletes. Regent Griffin is a guest at University events and an avid supporter of the Valdosta State Foundation.

I hope you will join me in welcoming Regent Griffin to this important role. His selection is a clear indication of our increasing visibility in the Georgia Higher Education System.

I am also pleased to report that Regent Doreen Poitevint of Bainbridge has been reappointed by Governor Sonny Perdue. I met Regent Poitevint during the presidential search. I will never forget her calming demeanor during a very stressful process. More important was her ability to describe the genuine passion Georgians hold for educational excellence. She along with Regent Larry Walker of Perry, have been great advocates and have supported us well.

I am saddened to report the loss of an outstanding scholar and longstanding member of the Board of Regents. Regent Felton Jenkins Jr. passed away last week. I appreciate representing you through the memorial proclamation I sent to his family. It is but a brief reflection on his impact on higher education and Valdosta State. I hope you will take the time to read his full obituary. He was a remarkable man and it was humbling to know him through work on the Regents retention taskforce.

Please accept my warmest regards for a productive semester.

Sincerely,

Patrick J. Schloss, President