

## **Press Release**

### **President John M. Beehler**

Four years ago, I was blessed with the extraordinary opportunity of serving as the President of Jacksonville State University (JSU). I took the helm of JSU knowing that I had an opportunity to have a major impact by rallying JSU's faculty, staff, students and alumni to improve certain elements of the University and position JSU for a very bright future.

Together, all of us accepted the challenges presented by an ambitious new strategic plan and together we have achieved tremendous success. JSU's enormous progress across all segments of the university during one of the most productive periods in JSU history is well-documented by [JSU's Comprehensive Four-Year Report 2015-2019](#).

These results are even more remarkable considering the devastation caused by the EF-3 tornado that struck our campus in March 2018. With virtually all our buildings hit by the tornado and over \$100M of damages – constituting the largest damage to state property in the history of Alabama - JSU's recovery and rebuilding of the campus in record time is indeed amazing. I will always cherish the memory of how all of us - faculty, staff, administration, students, alumni, volunteers and members of the community – rallied together to recover and rebuild JSU in record time.

As I reflect upon the extraordinary progress we have made together during the last four years, I can state with confidence that JSU has accomplished everything for which I was hired and much more during my tenure as President. Following five consecutive years of enrollment declines prior to my arrival in 2015, JSU's enrollment increased each year of my presidency (except for a slight decrease the fall semester following the tornado). During Fall 2019, we reached strategic enrollment milestones — exceeding 9,000 students and 100,000 credit hours for the first time since 2012 as a result of innovative strategies in recruiting, financial aid, and retention, and the invaluable contributions of faculty, staff, and alumni.

Significant progress can be attributed to new marketing and branding strategies, including the “You Just Know” marketing campaign, enhanced use of social media and digital videos, and improvement in our websites.

In addition to increasing enrollment, we substantially enhanced university resources. I am proud that, during 2018 and 2019, we received the three largest gifts in JSU history totaling approximately \$16M and kicked off our “Deeply Rooted Future Driven” Capital Campaign with an expanded goal of \$55M.

JSU's accomplishments from 2015 to 2019 also included adding new state-of-the-art facilities that greatly enhance our campus: the Recreation and Fitness Center, the Baseball Stadium and the Marching Southerners Practice Field. New buildings for the School of Business and Industry and the School of Health Professions and Wellness have also been approved and are slated for completion by 2021.

During my presidency, we reorganized Academic Affairs into six schools, maintained the highest accreditations for our academic programs in each field, revised our tenure and

promotion policies, and added key niche programs that will help to provide our region with the workforce of tomorrow.

Clearly, JSU has been moving with enormous momentum in a very positive direction over the past four years. I am extraordinarily proud of JSU and how far we have come together.

I realize that, during the past four years, we've set quite a very high bar for future administrations, but the First Lady and I dearly love JSU, and extend our very best wishes to our successors in meeting or exceeding our accomplishments!

As for me, by necessity my own focus during the coming months will continue to be on tackling the serious health challenges my family faces. I will be thinking fondly of all of you and thanking you for your prayers and support as I continue in that important endeavor.

Go Gamecocks!

JMB

October 22, 2019

JSU's Comprehensive 4-Year Report 2015-2019:

<http://www.jsu.edu/president/pdf/JSU-Comprehensive-4-Year-Report-2015-2019.pdf>