



**RICK SCOTT**  
GOVERNOR

August 2013

Dear College Freshman:

Congratulations on making the decision to further your education. As you begin your college career, you are taking a positive step to better your future. Across our state, opportunities are growing for Florida families, and furthering your education will certainly expand the possibilities you have to pursue your version of the American dream.

To help ensure your success in college, we began a major change in how we fund higher education in Florida this year. We are changing from a system that relied on students and families to cover rising costs, to one that awards funding based on how universities serve students as they earn degrees and secure well-paying jobs in our state. I understand that higher tuition or fees mean a heavier debt burden on you and your family following your graduation. For that reason, I will continue to work to shift the burdens of higher education funding away from the pocketbooks of students and families and onto a system that rewards universities that demonstrate results in serving our students.

My top priority is making sure Florida families have the opportunity to get a great job and have access to a quality education. Throughout your higher education, I encourage you to always set goals. In my case, I started school living in public housing and watched my parents struggle financially. I wanted to secure a job that would pay well enough for me to build a family, and getting an education was essential to reaching that goal. I went to community college before joining the United States Navy, and after my military service, I graduated from college and law school. My education and my experience enabled me to practice law, buy a small business (a donut shop) for \$7,500, and use the skills learned along the way to build successful companies.

From these experiences, I learned that success is not dependent upon where you start; it depends only on your willingness to work hard at obtaining the skills needed for success. By choosing to further your education, you have made a great start. The skills you learn and the individuals you meet will be valuable resources when applying for a permanent position. I am confident your hard work and perseverance will open up many opportunities for you.

I encourage you to envision big dreams as you pursue success. I wish you all the best for a great freshman year, and I look forward to your adding to the vitality of our great state.

Sincerely,

A blue ink signature of Rick Scott, written in a cursive style.

Rick Scott  
Governor