

STATE OF THE STUDENT BODY ADDRESS
- WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 11, 7:15 PM -
71ST STUDENT SENATE CHAMBERS, HCB 103
Student Body President Evan Steinberg

Hello and good evening, for those that are able, please join me in standing for a moment of silence to remember and honor every family member that lost a loved one, and to remember and honor every first responder who passed on this day 18 years ago. May we always continue to honor their memory, and may their memory be a blessing.

Senate President Higgins, Senate Pro Tempore Denton, honorable Senators, distinguished guests, students, faculty, staff, administration, and fellow Seminoles: Good evening and Welcome to the 2019 State of the Student Body Address. I would like to thank you all for attending this annual event, and would like to recognize some of our Distinguished guests including Vice President for Student Affairs Dr. Hecht, Associate Vice President for Student Affairs Dr. Crume, Associate Vice President for Student Affairs Angela Crume, Director of Administration and Chief of Staff for the Division of Student Affairs Dr. Spencer, Dean of Students Dr. Dobiyski, Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University Student Body President Rochard Moricette, Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University Student Body Secretary of State Kaelin Randle, and Tallahassee Community College Student Body President Trinity Bond.

Thank you for being here. My name is Evan Steinberg and I have the honor of serving as Student Body President, representing our 42,000 students. Thank you for joining Vice President Stephanie Lee, Student Body Treasurer Caleb Dawkins, and I for this occasion. As we entered office, it was and is our core belief that as Student Body Officers we are charged with advocating for students. As Student Body President it is my honored obligation to continue to advocate on behalf of the Student Body, to believe in the power of the student-voice, and to continue to believe that every action that comes to fruition is for the benefit of the Student Body.

At our inauguration, I spoke about the eponym of my high school, Marjory Stoneman Douglas. She once stated "Be a nuisance when it counts. Do your part to inform and stimulate the public to join your action. Be discouraged, & disappointed at failure ... but never give up." We have continued our vow to never give up, to advocate on behalf of and to continue to serve our student body. I am grateful to work with individuals who are passionate about representing their identity through our Student Government Agencies, student-leaders who are passionate about advocacy throughout Student Government Bureaus, and we are committed to continuing to collaborate with our partners in the Student Senate and Congress of Graduate Students.

In 1851, the state Legislature designated the Seminary West of the Suwannee River. As the oldest continuous site of higher education in the State of Florida, we have taken on many identities, from the Seminary West of the Suwannee River to the Florida College for Women, to everything in between, as we currently perpetuity as Florida State University.

As an institution, we are guided by the values set forth to Uphold the Garnet and Gold and to continue to portray Vires (Strength), Artes (Skill), and Mores (Character) through our collegiate experience and beyond. We have continued to embrace the philosophy that the individual student experience is at the forefront of our advocacy efforts.

It is an exciting time in Florida State University history. Monday morning, I had the honor of standing alongside students from various areas of study, who come from different backgrounds and experiences, who continually represent the values of our institution. As President Thrasher and Provost McRorie alongside distinguished speakers from Governor DeSantis to Faculty Senate President Harper announced that Florida State University has emerged to No. 18 among Public Universities in the United States, soaring 8 spots from No. 26 in 2018. Florida State University has a stellar four-year graduation rate of 72% the highest in the State of Florida and among the Top 10 of public universities in the country, as well as one of the highest student-veteran graduation rates in the nation of 86%. Florida State University was also ranked No. 1 in Florida for Veteran Success according to the US News and World Report thanks to our Student Veterans Center, and the Veteran's Alliance - including our Veteran Student Union.

This is a major milestone in Florida State University history, which was sparked by our designation as a preeminent university by the state legislature in 2013. Student Government Presidents and leaders all across campus have been at the forefront of student success. "Past administrations have supported student research through the Student Council for Undergraduate Research & Creativity, enabling students to be engaged within transformative research opportunities. Ensure students have access to higher education through the Office of Governmental Affairs, by lobbying for the expansion of Bright Futures, and for student-veteran support. The Student Foundation, has fostered a spirit of giving back, which continues beyond graduation and our student leaders continue to serve as ambassadors for Florida State University across the globe. Our students have emphasized the importance of Mental Health, through Remove the Mask: Mental Health Council, removing the stigma surrounding mental health to ensure the wellbeing of students is represented, and ensuring students are academically succeeding."

As the university continues to excel, our cabinet continues to promote the student voice. We have made a deliberate decision to change the dynamic of cabinet from a historically larger group to a smaller group consisting of six individuals. Our cabinet, consisting of our Secretary of Accessibility Demetrius Winn, Secretary of Student Engagement Essence Duncan, Press Secretary Kayla Francis, Secretary of Fulfillment and Strategic Initiatives Khamare Garner, Secretary of Co-Collegiate Affairs Nastassia Janvier, and Secretary of Health & Wellness Odalyz Guzman, have distinct roles in order to represent the Student Body, built upon the foundation of the platform Stephanie, Caleb, and I are so passionate about. As we come together each year for the State of the Student Body Address, we reflect on the past year, to share the progress of our plan as we continue to forge a positive direction for the Student Body.

We continue to progress our platform, as our Secretary of Co-Collegiate Affairs has been hard at work on continuing to build and enhance relationships with the Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University Student Government, as well as the Tallahassee Community College Student Government. We look forward to continuing to build

relations with our respective Student Body, and we are looking forward to future programming. Certain members of the Student Government Association, will have the distinct honor of attending the Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University Student Government Inauguration this upcoming Friday. I speak on behalf of the Student Body, when emphasizing the importance of collective action and collaboration with our fellow institutions of Higher Education in Tallahassee. Through this we were able to jointly welcome students to Tallahassee alongside the Mayor of Tallahassee John Dailey. Vice President Lee and I had the honor of meeting former Student Body President and Current Mayor of Tallahassee John Dailey and former Student Body Vice President Ginny Dailey, at commencement this past spring. Through this we have had more of a presence in local government, as we continue to work with the Office of the Mayor on a variety of initiatives, above all the wellbeing of the Student Body. Our Governmental Affairs and Co-Collegiate Affairs team have been working on re-establishing our connections with fellow Student Governments in the Atlantic Coast Conference as we prepare to advocate together on Capitol Hill in October.

We are looking forward to launching our Student Government Podcast, to empower the Voices of Florida State University students. V.A.M. or Our Voices. Our Advocacy. Our Movement. Is centered around the torches of Vires, Artes, and Mores. We look forward to sharing the individual student experience and sharing the stories and experiences of our Student Body through meaningful dialogue. Our Secretary of Student Engagement has continued to reach out to our student body, through offering direct support to Registered Student Organizations on Campus, and fellow student-leaders. This year our annual Welcome Back SGA BBQ, was the most well attended event BBQ so far, with over 600 students attending. We look forward to continuing to #BringingSGAToYou, as we engage with our Student Body. We will continue to participate in events around campus as we attend not only SGA centric events but also events all across the greater FSU community. Dr. Hecht and I were able to collaborate on our convocation speech and provide our Top 20 things to do at Florida State University to the new class! Student Body Treasurer Dawkins, has been working to coordinate Financial Literacy Workshops in order to further inform our Student Body on financial needs.

As an Executive Branch, we look forward to continuing working with the 71st Student Senate on Legislation, as we ensure that as an Executive Branch we fulfill our mandate of ensuring Checks & Balances remain effective, and legislation is crafted to the benefit of the Student Body at Florida State University. As we started this journey we wanted to ensure that we weren't just creating seats at the table, but to ensure that the table is one worth sitting at. Through harnessing the Student Voice, we have continued to advocate for the student body throughout the university structure from advocating and working in conjunction with our students in the Unconquered Program, to students who are active members of Greek Life, to our Student-Veteran community on campus, and student athletes. We have increased accessibility to the student-body to serve on University Committees, by implementing an application process. Our students continue to serve in vital roles, as students represent over 150 specific seats within committees at Florida State University. Our students play a unique role in shaping the University, as they provide insight and context into the life of a student, and articulate the student voice to administration, faculty, and staff. The student voice is imperative to the success of our university.

Our Secretary of Accessibility continues to expand advocacy efforts within the university and Student Government Association, as accessibility is incorporated into the Homecoming Parade, and as we continue to hopefully expand Open-Housing at Florida State University. The wellbeing of our Student Body is of the utmost importance, our Secretary of Health & Wellness has continued to collaborate with the Division of Student Affairs, today the division in collaboration with multiple campus partners launched Live Well Day at Florida State University. Since session has ended this past May, our Office of Governmental Affairs advocated for the passage of Andrew's Law as well as Medical Amnesty in the State of Florida. The implementation of these pieces of legislation is important to protecting and enhancing the overall wellbeing of our student body. We look forward to continuing to work with various University partners to inform students of these changes.

It is vital to continue to be aware of the needs of our students, when it relates to College Affordability and Textbook Affordability. I will continue to advocate for our students, who face unique challenges during their collegiate experience. We will be relaunching the RoundUp campaign in partnership with Student Business Services, as aim to raise funds for the Food for Thought Pantry to continue college affordability efforts. The Office of Governmental Affairs has maintained a strong presence with our elected officials through meetings with local Representatives and Senators, and preparing to meet with members of the Seminole Caucus. As an Executive Branch, we were able to visit our Panama City Campus. It is vital to maintain relations with our fellow Seminoles as we were able to explore, the campus, understand the initiatives that are ongoing in Panama City, and meet the Faculty, Staff, Administration, and student leaders who make the campus thrive. We were honored to host Panama City Student-leaders in Tallahassee. We hope this becomes an annual occurrence for student-leaders on the Tallahassee and Panama-City campus. We have had the privilege of working with our student Direct Support Organizations, as they continue to support the university through their contributions and commitment to academic and athletic excellence.

Working in conjunction with Seminole Student Boosters, we have been able to assist in launching the Nole Zone, as fellow student-leaders aim for the ambitious goal of the Nole Zone becoming one of the largest student sections in all of Division 1 Basketball with a desire to bring that support to all of our scholarship sports around campus. The Executive Branch has continued to partner with organizations to increase Seminole Spirit on campus, and we were honored to join the Student Athlete Advisory Council for FSU's first Welcome Back Pep Rally, as well as the Student Alumni Association for FSU's Traditions Fest. Vice President Lee has continued her efforts to work towards the Student Body having more insight and knowledge about the Seminole Tribe of Florida, and our FSU's relationship with them. It is vital to our success to remember our future, to recognize the history and traditions of our institution and Student Government Association. However in order to meet the growing needs of our student body, to ensure it flourishes it is also imperative to have a plan for the future.

Our Secretary of Fulfillment & Strategic Initiatives continues to converse with our university community, in order to gain insight into crafting a Strategic Plan for our Student Government Association. I applaud the efforts of our Press Secretary who ensures we continue to update and inform our Student Body about the Student Government Association, through our social media accounts and the newly created Student Body President twitter account. To say the Executive Branch has been busy is an understatement, I am appreciative of the team we have formulated that works tirelessly to advocate on behalf of the Student Body. Our Student Body Chief of Staff Jayne McLaughlin and Deputy Chief of Staff Max D'Ou Rodriguez continue to ensure the Executive Branch runs smoothly with as little bumps as possible.

Earlier this week, I was able to express the importance of student-leaders throughout the history of Florida State University, through building upon the foundation that my predecessors have set, to continue to uphold the mantle of representing the student voice. As I reflect on my time throughout the Student Government Association, as Stephanie Caleb and I stand here today, it is important to reflect on the future, on the next generation of students and student-leaders at Florida State University. We have had the honor of speaking to both the Freshman Leadership Institute and the Transfer Leadership Institute, as these students learn the necessary skills to take on the mantle of student leadership in the future. Student Government has and will continue to play a vital role in our university.

I would be remiss if I didn't also thank our partners within the University Community, including University Relations, the Division of Student Affairs, The President's Cabinet, the Faculty Senate, and many other wonderful entities within Florida State University. It is a privilege to work with so many individuals who have student-interests at the core of their beliefs at Florida State University. We look forward to continuing to represent the student-voice and achieving our goals through collaborating with you. Special thank you to Dr. Danielle Morgan Acosta and the Student Governance & Advocacy Team, for continuing to advise and guide the Executive Branch.

As I continue my journey as Student Body President, it is imperative to remain true to our tenant of #BringingSGAToYou, to remain true to raising the torches of Vires, Artes, and Mores, and remain true to acting upon these values. As Student Body President, I vow to continue our efforts to ensure the State of the Student Body upholds Seminole Pride. Thank you.