

George L. Hanbury, II, Ph.D

Nova Southeastern University's Sixth President

Remarks from Official Investiture Ceremony

Thursday, April 21 2011

“Trail of Excellence”

Good afternoon. Thank you all for coming out this afternoon to witness the symbolic transfer of leadership of this great university and the opportunity for me to unveil a new vision and mission for Nova Southeastern University adopted by the Board of Trustees at its last meeting.

Thank you Chairman Assaf, NSU's Trustees and everyone on the stage this afternoon for your kind greetings. It is a special honor, indeed the highest honor ever bestowed on me, to accept the charge of president and to wear the symbols of the office.

NSU, as a private-not-for profit university, is fortunate to be served by a board of community leaders who devote untold hours of service on special committees, come to Trustee meetings, and represent the university throughout the state, while setting policy on the university's development and providing advice and counsel to me. We all owe them our thanks and gratitude for their unselfish donation of their time and talents.

Would the Board of Trustees please stand? Please join me in expressing thanks to the Trustees of Nova Southeastern University.

Special thanks also must go to a gentleman who was able to hold this university together for 22 years as its president. If it had not been for him, it is quite possible that none of us would be here. Let's recognize Dr. Abraham Fischler, the second president and now President Emeritus of Nova Southeastern University.

If none of would have been here today without Abe Fischler, I definitely would not have been here without Chancellor Ray Ferrero Jr. It was Ray who hired me 13 years ago to be his Chief Operating Officer and it was he who became my mentor and allowed me to be his protégé. Thank you Ray.

I would also like to thank the committee who planned and put together today's investiture. Those members include Dr. DePiano, Dr. Lippman, Dr. Williams, Mrs. Ramos, Ms Poff, Mr. Santulli, Mr. Crocquet, Mr. Dawson, and all of their staff members. I would also like to thank the wonderful orchestra led by Dr. Mark Cavanaugh. In fact, these people and thousands more, keep this university beautiful and running smoothly and professionally on a daily basis. Could all employees of NSU please stand. Please join me in applauding and recognizing their efforts.

Since this is a momentous occasion for me, I have invited my family members from Virginia, North Carolina, Arizona, and Florida to share with me in this celebration, and I would like to introduce them to my NSU family. Years ago, two reluctant single-parents were coaxed to go on a blind date. On that first date, I became smitten by a beautiful “brown eyed girl” named Jana and last month we celebrated our 22nd wedding anniversary. We have had a wonderful journey together, working, living, loving, and learning in two states as we tried to merge two families to become one. I would like to ask my wife Jana to come up on the stage and share this moment with me.

Let me introduce our children, their spouses, and their children. Starting with the youngest, my daughter Melissa and her husband Jeff and their twins Cameron and Dylan; second, my stepdaughter, Jia and her son Cole; and third, my son Trey and his wife Suzanna and their two children, Amelia and Nate. I also want to invite my sister Jean Powell and her husband Jimmy, who in October will celebrate their 64th wedding anniversary, to share the stage with me.

Finally, I would like to recognize my cousin, nieces, nephews, and sister-in-law who came from Virginia, North Carolina, and as far away as Arizona. First, my cousin, Buddy Pritchard and his son Brad, my niece Michele Hartley and her husband Bob, my nephew Charles Hanbury and his wife Beth, my sister-in-law, Jody Stowe and her daughter Patsy (a sophomore at NSU), and her son Nelson. Would all of you please stand.

Special thanks also goes to Dr. Ed Brickell and his wife Nancy for making the trip from Virginia. Not only to share this moment with me and my family but to shed a little light and some light heartedness about me and my past. Ed has been an inspiration for me for many years. I remember when we both had dark hair and he was Superintendent of Schools in Virginia Beach while I was its City Manager. Since he was my senior, he was my mentor, friend, kindred spirit and advisor for many years. Ed even had influence on me of which he was not aware. When my mother was ill with cancer during my tenure as City Manager in Virginia Beach, I visited her and informed her that Ed had been working diligently on his doctorate at William and Mary on weekends and evenings and was to be awarded the degree from that prestigious college.

That is when she lovingly said, “Little Eddie Brickell (since she knew him as a child growing up in our “blue-collar” Norfolk neighborhood known as Berkley) getting his doctorate. I always wanted you to get your doctorate.” “Momma,” I said, “I promise you someday I will get my doctorate.” She passed away that evening. So, it was “little Eddie Brickell” who unknowingly became part of my promise to honor my mother’s last request of me. Thank you Ed for being part of my life.

If my mother was a great inspiration in my life, so too was my father who passed away two years before my mother’s death, when I was 29 years old. Consequently, let me tell you about my parents so you may know a little more about me than the bio in your program. I am the youngest

of three children (Emmette, Jean, and George) born to Adah and Emmette Hanbury. My father, a twin, was born in 1898 as one of eleven children, and my mother was born in 1906 as one of seven children. George L. Hanbury, my grandfather, was a farmer and as such my father and all but his youngest sibling had to forego educational pursuits in order to work on the farm.

My mother, “a city girl,” on the other hand wanted to pursue a high school education but unfortunately had to quit school to help support her family after her father died during a flu epidemic in the early 1900s. After leaving the farm, my father eventually found work on the docks as a stevedore, loading and unloading ships and eventually becoming a Dock Master.

My brother entered into an apprentice program to learn the trade of a Pipe Fitter in the Norfolk Naval Shipyard and my sister took a job with the telephone company. The trades of my father, brother, and sister were honorable and allowed them to support their families. However, it was my mother who encouraged me to go further and somehow find a way to go to college. My mother would remind me that my father could have gone much higher in positions had he had more formal education and that if I wanted to succeed in life, I needed to have something that could never be taken away from me – a college education. Education to her was an investment that could not be diminished.

Like many children of 19th and 20th Century parents, my father and mother also relied heavily on clichés, truisms, metaphors, and Bible verses to make a point or convey a lesson to me and my sister and brother. My children will confess that I have passed many of those clichés, sayings, and truisms on to them. Several of those have been with me since early childhood and have guided me through life, even to the point of helping me to structure the vision adopted by the Board of Trustees. One such cliché was often repeated by both of my parents and was a lesson for me to set goals early in life and see them through one day at a time, one week at a time, one month at a time. They would say, “If a task is once begun, never leave it till it's done. Be the labor great or small, do it well George, or not at all.”

In later years, I received the same admonition albeit a shorter message, from the Chair of my dissertation committee at Florida Atlantic University, Dr. Charles W. Washington, who, although he has retired from academia, has honored me by attending this ceremony with his wife Mary. Dr. Washington, said, “Get it Done; See it Through!”

A truism often used by my mother was a phrase from the Bible to remind me that I was named after my grandfather, George Lafayette Hanbury – an honorable man. My mother reminded me that, like my father, his word was his bond. Furthermore, he had a good name and so did all those who had the Hanbury surname, and that if I ever did anything to bring disrespect to their name or mine, there was a “Great Cloud of Witnesses” watching me. Of course, when I was young, I thought my mother was referring to our neighbors who had the absolute right to correct me or spank me if necessary and then I would get another spanking when I got home; however, it was later that I realized that my mother was referring to those giants that had passed on in our family and whose reputation we carried and whose honor we upheld, who were watching in that “Great Cloud of Witnesses,” supporting and encouraging us to succeed, not to punish, and to see the task through and done with integrity.

Somehow I feel that it was that spirit within the “Great Cloud of Witnesses” that enabled me to find employment as an operating engineer on the Chesapeake Bay which helped pay for most of my college education, seek my master’s degree and eventually pursue and achieve the doctorate. The educational pursuits that my mother so strongly encouraged, gave me the freedom of choice for a professional career and enabled me to move to succeeding responsible positions as a chief executive, and to experience intrinsic rewards such as those I have received from students in the classroom, and to realize that I am making a difference in the lives of people and helping to improve their quality of life. That freedom was provided me through education and allowed me the opportunity to witness the progressive realization of a worthy goal. It offered a son of a Dock Master the opportunity to be a President of a great university.

Today’s investiture has far more significance than the symbolic transfer of leadership to a new president and for the NSU family to get to know more about me and my family. It is an opportunity for the unveiling of a new vision, mission, and a set of core values that is to be used as our collective guide and organizational conscience in everything we do as we go forward.

Since the board of Trustees announced that I would become Nova Southeastern University’s sixth president sixteen months ago, I have had the opportunity to work with them, Chancellor Ferrero, Provost DePiano, Health Professions Division Chancellor Lippman, the deans, vice presidents, the faculty, the staff, students and alumni (more than 4,000 people) to formulate a new vision for NSU. Not George Hanbury’s vision but our collective “single-shared vision.”

The Vision, Mission, and our Core Values are in your program.

If our vision may seem to some as audacious and overextending, we believe that by 2020 our vision will be a reality. Why? - Because, we stand on the shoulders of Giants. Although NSU’s founders started out in a small store front in 1964 at 232 East Las Olas Blvd, they too had a vision that they were creating a great university that would bring the classroom to the student and

not force the student to choose between working or achieving their educational goals. They nurtured a vision of providing a university in Broward County at times and places convenient for the student, not the university. Early founders such as Jim Farquhar, August Paoli, Mary McCahill, Bob Steele, Alex Schure, George English, Henry Kinney, Bill Horvitz, Tinsley Ellis, Coleman Judd, Henry Perry, Dwight Rogers, Bob Elmore, Myron Segal, Robert Ferris, Hamilton and Charles Forman, A.L. Mailman, Louis Parker, Leo Goodwin, Edwin Rosenthal, and the five presidents who have preceded me - Warren Winstead, Abraham Fischler, Stephen Feldman, Ovid Lewis, and Ray Ferrero.

Gifts by Edwin Rosenthal of \$300,000 and Louis Parker of \$1 Million in 1965 made possible the construction of the first two buildings in Davie, which today bear their names, on what was then known as "Forman Field." With the development of new facilities and a dormitory, we were able to admit our first class of 17 Ph.D. students enrolled in 4 degree programs taught by 17 faculty members with 38 support personnel. In 1970, we graduated 5 of those 17 Ph.D. students and Abe Fischler was invested as the second president with a \$4 Million Budget – We were on a roll! In 1974 we changed our name from Nova University of Advanced Technology to Nova University and in 1994 we again changed our name to Nova Southeastern University with the merger of Southeastern University of the Health Sciences into Nova under the respective leaderships of Dr. Morton Terry, Southeastern University's President, and Ray Ferrero, Jr. who was then Chair of Nova University.

Those early founders could never envision that their university, with its 17 students pursuing 4 degree programs, would become the seventh largest private-not-for-profit university in the United States with 29,000 students pursuing more than 135 degree programs and conferring more than 7,500-8,000 degrees annually. They would have been amazed to discover that more than 136,000 students had graduated and who now live in all 50 states and more than 63 foreign countries who are proud to claim NSU as their alma mater.

They would shudder at the fact that we now have a \$1Billion balance sheet with a \$580 Million budget supporting more than 5 million square feet of classrooms, libraries, laboratories, recreational areas, learning centers, museum galleries, offices and dormitories resulting in a \$1.5 Billion economic impact on the state of Florida. Indeed, each succeeding president and Board of Trustees leading this university has been able to see farther and clearer because they have stood on the shoulders of their predecessors, just as we will profit from those that came before us.

And now, embraced by more than 4,000 employees comprised of deans, vice presidents, faculty, staff, student leaders, and the Trustees, we have adopted a new vision - ***NSU's Vision 2020!***

By 2020, through excellence and innovations in teaching, research, service and learning, Nova Southeastern University will be recognized by accrediting agencies, the academic community, and the general public, as a premier private not-for-profit university of quality

and distinction that engages all students and produces alumni who serve with integrity in their lives, fields of study, and resulting careers.

In order to fulfill our vision we have restated our purpose or mission; therefore, *The Mission of Nova Southeastern University, a private, not-for-profit institution, is to offer a diverse array of innovative academic programs that complement on-campus educational opportunities and resources with accessible distance learning programs to foster academic excellence, intellectual inquiry, leadership, research, and commitment to community through engagement of students and faculty members in a dynamic, life-long learning environment.*

Bringing a new single-shared vision to reality while supporting a Mission statement requires team work whose members must share values. Students who come to this university need to know what we stand for and what values we hold sacrosanct and will not be compromised for expediency. Therefore, we have established eight core values we want everyone to know and share in accomplishing our vision and fulfilling our mission.

NSU's core values are: Academic Excellence; Student Centered; Integrity; Research and Scholarship; Diversity; Opportunity; Innovation; Community.

Academic Excellence:

We have learned through the many surveys we have undertaken that students come to this university and remain because of inspiring faculty. Likewise we have learned that faculties are inspired by enthused and engaged students. Such a symbiotic relationship is what will foster the concepts of **academic excellence** and provide us guidance on the exciting journey on the "Trail of Excellence," that the vision will carry us. Toward that effort, I would like to recognize our wonderful faculty in all disciplines at NSU who have embraced this vision of excellence and who have promised to take this journey with me.

Faculty members, with whom I have had the distinct privilege and honor to join, please stand and be recognized.

To the faculty, I **challenge** you to explore new ways and programs in order to engage all students and produce alumni who serve with integrity in their lives, fields of study, and resulting careers. In return, I **promise** to do my best to create an atmosphere where intellectual inquiry is fostered, to provide the tools you need to engage in excellent teaching, scholarship and service, and to attempt to remove all barriers to your intellectual growth and professional recognition.

Student Centered:

NSU is **student centered** since students are the focus of our priorities, resource decisions, and planning. We are stewards of student needs and advocates for student academic success. Students, are the main reason, indeed the only reason, any of us are here today.

Through the leadership of Dr. Williams, Dean of Student Affairs, and Mr. Mominey, Athletic Director, we have assembled a group of student leaders representing undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs that have embraced NSU's vision, and will assist in bringing the vision to reality. Student Leadership groups such as the PAN Student Government Association, The Razor's Edge Leadership Program, Student Athletes, and a new group known as the President's 64 in recognition of our founding year – 1964, have all embraced the new vision. I thank those students and all students who are here today and would like to recognize them.

All students of NSU please stand and be recognized.

To each student, I **challenge** you to take full advantage of the entire NSU experience; to expand your mind by being inquisitive with “passionate curiosity” and interactive in and outside of the classroom, to use our facilities, to keep yourself physically fit, and to participate in the hundreds of professional and social experiences available to you. In return, I **promise** to continue to make certain NSU offers a comprehensive collegial experience that prepares you for a lifetime of learning, professional success, and social responsibility.

Integrity:

Integrity involves honesty and fairness in everything we do, consistency in instruction, ethics of scholarship, freedom of inquiry, professional and honorable support personnel, and open and truthful engagement with the community through effective communication, policies, and ethical fiscal practices.

To all of us, I **challenge** us to live up to the admonitions of Shakespeare who gave Polonius his words of advice to Laertes, “This above all: to thine own self be true, and it must follow, as the night the day, Thou canst not then be false to any man.

Research and Scholarship:

Several weeks ago, I had the opportunity to view exciting **research and scholarship** projects and paper presentations undertaken by our students in various undergraduate programs. Students whose pursuit of knowledge and passion for discovery were very inspiring to me, and support our efforts to leverage our premier graduate and professional programs to attract the best and brightest undergraduates. Some of the presentations I witnessed during the symposium covered research projects from software engineering to marine biological and human genome studies for cancer research, as well as the measurement of brain patterns of people who speak one language as compared to those who spoke more than one language.

With the completion of the Nation's Center of Excellence in Coral Reef Ecosystems Science and the Center for Collaborative Research, NSU will have more than \$100Million worth of facilities

devoted to research that will foster collaboration between faculty and students of disparate disciplines to stretch their minds to integrate and innovate.

With the completion of these two buildings, NSU will have state of the art research facilities, second to none, which will create an atmosphere of innovation and research for our students and faculty. Indeed, they will provide opportunities for incubators in high tech, software engineering, and wet labs for bench research for private entrepreneurs to collaborate with our faculty and students. Consequently, NSU will offer the only incubators for private wet-lab bench research and software development and simulation in Broward County.

Diversity:

I am proud of the fact that NSU is a minority/majority university which recognizes **diversity** as strength, and therefore enriches a learning environment focused on preparing individuals to live and work in a global society. Differences in views, interpretations and reactions derived from diversity give power and stability to individuals, organizations, and universities.

Opportunity:

Opportunity fosters the possibility for anyone associated with NSU to acquire an education or partake in an educational experience through creative, yet sound pedagogical programs. During the last sixteen months as I have gone around to deans, VPs, faculty, staff, and students, I have heard how fortunate we are to be at NSU where opportunities are offered and continue to be offered to those willing to expand their knowledge, try new ideas, and accept responsibility.

Innovation:

Innovation is the creative and deliberate application of teaching, research, scholarship, and service for effective education, and the development of useful products and processes providing added value to the community.

Community:

Extension and **community** outreach programs are fundamental to a not-for-profit university; therefore; NSU has, and will continue to be, intricately involved in outreach programs for the “common good.” NSU will increasingly involve the broader university community in outreach programs that respond to the changing needs of the people and students we serve.

We will continue to make an overall contribution to the future of the community and its capacity to compete globally for business, talent, and culture. In my opinion, it would be irresponsible for universities in a “knowledge-based” economy not to consider how each university may leverage its resources and assist the community’s overall strategy for economic progress for the benefit of its residents.

Our vision, mission, and values reflect our deep-seated belief in making a difference in our community as well as our commitment to enhance learning opportunities for our students - by engaging in academic pursuits that bring theory to life in practice.

Therefore, to EVERYONE in the NSU Community ...I **challenge** us all to continue to be ambassadors for NSU, and to leave a legacy by helping us to assist our community in fulfilling its dreams and aspirations. In return, I **promise** that together we will see this community prosper so as to add prestige, esteem, and success to anyone positively associated with us as we pursue our Vision 2020.

The Board of Trustees' vote of confidence in me as Chancellor Ferrero's successor is the culmination of my professional and academic dreams and aspirations, and presents an exciting challenge for me in the future. However, it also is an awesome responsibility. Responsibility to the Trustees who have entrusted me to lead this university, a responsibility to the students who wish to learn and expand their knowledge, a responsibility to the faculty and staff, and a responsibility to the NSU community and beyond.

I pledge to all of you gathered here today that as long as God and the Trustees allow me to continue, I will devote my time, my talent, and all of my efforts to see that the vision of this university is brought to fruition without compromising our values in the name of expediency.

I end as I began, with that "Great Cloud of Witnesses" who my mother so long ago reminded me were watching and encouraging me to run the race of life successfully with integrity and honor. That "Great Cloud of Witnesses" has been expanded as the years have passed to include those giants who were instrumental in making NSU what it is today. I stand on their shoulders, fully cognizant of their legacy and the task before me. We will see further and embrace changes in the future as we have witnessed changes from the past. As Heraclitus stated, "No man ever steps in the same river twice, for it is not the same river and he's not the same man."

We are all gathered here today to witness the symbolic transfer of leadership with great hope in the future for Nova Southeastern University. I assure you that where there is hope in the future, there is power in the present - one day at a time, one month at a time until we see our single-shared vision come to reality.

I accept and embrace the responsibility of leading Nova Southeastern University to bring its vision to reality because I am proud to exclaim: "I am NSU – You are NSU - **We are all NSU!**"

Thank you.