



Faculty and Staff Convocation Remarks
Marquita Eldridge, Staff Advisory Council President
Presented Aug.13, 2019

Good morning, my name is Marquita Eldridge and I am President of the Staff Advisory Council. As we come together today to mark the beginning of the new academic year, I want to welcome back all of our returning staff members and also extend a special welcome to the newest members of our team.

Nine years ago, this month, I stepped on this campus as an intern in the Marketing and Communications Office. While my plan was to get some experience to build my portfolio and move on, God had other plans for me. After a year and a half, I was blessed to be offered a full-time job, which I have had the pleasure of holding for the last 7 ½ years.

I provided that anecdote to say this, we work at an institution that prides itself on our higher purpose -- to help students realize their dreams. When I first came here as an intern, I wasn't sure where my path would take me, but it was with the guidance and support of many staff members, some of which sit in the audience today, that helped me, and still help me, find my purpose –my why. I am reminded of that “why” every May and December as I watch our students cross the stage.

As staff members we play many different roles on our campuses, and oftentimes those roles are quiet--barely visible in the day-to-day grind--but it doesn't mean those roles aren't important.

Some of you work with students every day and some of you do not, and that is okay. What we all should keep in mind is our common goal -- to make sure our students reach their goals and achieve their dreams --and there are a lot of moving parts to make those dreams happen.

While you work tirelessly to help keep those parts moving, the Staff Advisory Council is here to help you and to be your voice. The council serves in an advisory role to university leadership on matters that affect the staff. Summer hours, additional days off over the last several years, staff recognition awards and employee socials such as Bubballusa are just a tiny sampling of the work done previously by the council on behalf of the staff.

In the coming weeks, we will be calling on you to get involved with us. To join our committees. To participate in the process. It is our goal this year is to get more staff involved --to make our collective voice stronger—We want to help you find your purpose --your why.

Thank You.