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President Linda Bleicken's Remarks to the House of Representatives of the State of Georgia

Linda Bleicken

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President Linda Bleicken's Remarks to the House of Representatives of the State of Georgia
February 4, 2010

Thank you, Speaker Ralston, Speaker Pro Tem Jones, Representative Purcell, the Chatham County Delegation, and all members of the House of Representatives.

I am honored to have the privilege to speak to you today. As president of Armstrong Atlantic State University, I am grateful for your recognition of Armstrong's 75th anniversary and I invite you to join us in our celebration.

As you may know, Armstrong was founded in 1935 by the City of Savannah under the leadership of Mayor Thomas Gamble. It was a time when the Great Depression gripped the country. Those were extremely difficult times, so we are proud that our city leaders and founders had the vision and the courage to establish the college. They recognized that without such a local alternative, an entire generation of young Savannahians might not have had a viable opportunity to achieve a college education.

Our founders understood that even in the toughest times, we must look ahead to the future.

Today, as we struggle with our own economic challenges, I am consistently humbled and inspired by the vision and toughness of our founders. Without their determination, it would have been impossible to grow from a beginning enrollment of 175 to today's population of more than 7,500.

As we look forward to our next 75 years, Armstrong Atlantic State University will continue to provide the best possible education for our residents and students who come from across the state, the country and from more than 79 countries around the world. We know that better times are ahead for our institution; in fact, we believe our best days are yet to come.

Although today is tough, we owe our founders and our students our very best. As we have seen, our future is shaped by today's actions.

It is my pledge that Armstrong Atlantic State University will continue to be a leader in providing the graduates sorely needed in healthcare, education, law enforcement, science, and the arts to support the region and to meet the challenges in the years ahead.

Thank you for your good wishes and for your continued support of higher education in Georgia.