**WELCOME SPEECH**

**FOR**

**JIM CAMPBELL**

Hello everyone and welcome to this year’s Florida A and M University Alumni Gala!! I want to acknowledge the Alumni Association for sponsoring this great event... It’s terrific to see so many of you... family, friends, distinguished guests, **friends** of distinguished guests...(**Wait for the laugh**)...(**Do you want to acknowledge the special guests? If so**) I would like to extend a warm welcome to our very special guests, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and all of you avid, die hard Rattlers football fans, **WE’RE BACK!** It’s been a while since we last met at 2017’s gala, and all I can say... and I know you’ll agree... it’s **GOOD** to be here!! .... from what I can see, you’ve all gotten the “memo...” what can be “**hotter**” than a fantastic soul food feast??? How about seeing all of you dressed and ready for a great night of fun and dancing, all decked out in your **best and brightest.**... which usually describes our fantastic students, but tonight I’m referring to all of these brilliant outfits worn by all of you!!!

We’re here in eager anticipation of the upcoming season for our football Rattlers. This is going to be a really exciting year for the team. A new coach brings new strategy and fresh perspective like a breath of fresh air... (**If the new coach is there, do you want to introduce him?**). Ladies and gentlemen, let’s give a **HUGE** Rattler welcome to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_... the man who’s ready and willing to shake up the season and coach our team to victory!

Much wisdom and advice has been freely shared by the experts, the public, the press, and spectators about the merits and challenges of college football... we know the pitfalls... we’ve seen the downside, but if there were every a great unifying force, it’s rooting for our team... and while one person may have said that college football is the only sport in which a game is longer than its professional counter part, there are other, more memorable thoughts to remind us **NOT** of the agony of defeat, but of the thrill of playing the game.... and winning... **winning** is **not bad**... **really** (**Wait for the laugh**). It was the great Joe Namath who said, “When you win, **NOTHING** hurts...” that’s **ONE** cure for what ails you!!

It’s been said that in the South, college football is a religion. I know if that’s so, we are all **PROUD** to bear witness at the **TEMPLE** of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Stadium... On September first, our season begins... as we face off against Fort Valley State in the first of six unforgettable and exciting home games... we’ll be up against champions and underdogs, but I know our Rattlers will prevail. and as Shum Jordan said, “Always remember... Goliath was a 40 point favorite over David...”

Here’s to a fantastic evening and an even better, more colorful, delicious and exciting football season... and Coach, I know you’ve heard this, but with your guidance, we’ll not **ONLY** see.... we’ll experience and **REMEMBER** that “**RATTLERS WILL STRIKE, AND STRIKE, AND STRIKE AGAIN**!!! Thank you all!!