

**Executive Director's Report
Commission on Higher Education
7 November 2013**

Thank you, General Finan. Welcome back from your Mediterranean cruise. You said it was a vacation, but WikiLeaks tells me that it had something to do with flying fighter jets from an aircraft carrier into Syria. That's a discussion for another time. I hope your wife enjoyed the ride.

Making good use of old wine in new bottles is something at which state governments excel. Our talent pools run low, and we ask good grapes to press themselves once again into public service, time and time again.

I arrived in South Carolina at a time when the perceived privilege of serving as a commissioner of higher education might mean the opportunity to do something meaningful.

You are all still here with that expectation. Our opportunity to make that happen is now arising.

Our strategic planning retreat last month set some very clear directions about where you want the Commission to move, and we will discuss those in a few moments.

But in anticipation of the challenges that confront us, yesterday I met with the CHE staff and outlined a new plan of operation for our agency.

We will be organized differently, and we will become a purpose-driven state government commission that is fully responsive to your concerns and issues.

Our new organizational plan is included in your materials this morning.

- We will reduce our divisions from five to two.
- We will have a leaner executive team and a broader leadership team.
- We will integrate our related activities and identify our priorities.

This reorganization is driven by the following principles:

- Alignment of functions
- Alignment of talents and skill sets with those functions
- Creation of back-stops & understudies (also known as succession planning)
- Creation of opportunities for advancement within the agency
- Creation of opportunities to develop leadership skills
- Distributed authority and workload
- Distributed risk management for salary sourcing
- Increased accountability and merit recognition

A visible symbol of our new organization is that we will have a new CHE website. It will go live this afternoon.

This past weekend my only son got married. As you know, I have frequently invoked marriage as a metaphor of our relationships and our purpose.

A marriage is a merger, but with much more at stake. There continue to be conversations in Charleston about a merger. If such a marriage proposal should emerge, my understanding is that the betrothed parties will come to you to ask your consent.

Things are getting pleasant in Mt. Pleasant. There are reports that Francis Marion is thinking about dating that southern belle, the College of Charleston.

Infilaw is also considering a courtship with the College, but they have signed a non-disclosure agreement, so we don't know if they're really serious or just teasing.

Despite the Commission's action last month, Infilaw did not release the current owners of the Charleston School of Law from the exclusivity clause of the asset purchase agreement, so Misters Carr, Kosko, and Westbrook have not been at full liberty to engage in these conversations.

The CSOL saga has brought a sharp focus to the Commission's role in approving or denying operating licenses to proprietary institutions.

Next Tuesday I will attend my first board meeting of the SC Higher Education Foundation. Among the topics to be discussed:

The Campus safety conference for this year has been cancelled.

The Professor of the Year awards will go forward but without the luncheon

CHE has signed direct sub-award agreements with the Know2 pilot projects in Beaufort, Marlboro, and Cherokee.

There will be an update on the Competing Through Knowledge project.

Your chairman, Brigadier General John Finan, has been chosen to receive the Sgt. William Jasper freedom award at the state Chamber of Commerce summit next week. Congratulations, John, on that distinction.

Next Monday is Veterans' Day. Let us pause for a moment to acknowledge the extraordinary sacrifices that our men and women in uniform make in defense of our freedoms. We are honored by their service.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That concludes my report. I will be happy to respond to any questions.