

# Clark Atlanta Will Be 'Biggest and Baddest'

Contributed by Anastasia Semien -- Black College Wire  
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CAU president's broad interview with student newspaper

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Clark Atlanta University president Carlton Brown promises a bright future for students and guarantees to take this university to new heights- if only the students and faculty will too share his vision.

CAU has been under scrutiny since the February layoffs. Brown said that this minor setback will not stop the ultimate comeback for the university. "My vision of where we are going has not changed at all," Brown said.

Brown said that part of the school's hardship came into place because of past decisions.

"We have to go back and make some of the decisions that should have been made 20 years ago," he said.

Even so Brown praised CAU's past presidents, Dr. Thomas Cole and Dr. Walter Broadnax and called them "gentlemen who faced enormous struggles."

Brown's biggest goals at this time are for the university to "begin to move collectively toward true community [and to] begin in ourselves to recognize who we truly are and are supposed to be."

He said that these two things will "fuel" his list of objectives for the university, which most importantly include making CAU a more "research-intensive graduate institution," drawing in a more diverse student body and getting the Department of Mass Media Arts accredited by the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC).

If Brown has his way, CAU will become "a big-time research institution." He feels that building research infrastructure, among many things, will help do just that. Brown said the question must and will be raised about the "implications for building this type of infrastructure." He believes that the benefits will be phenomenal for the university.

In wanting to increase the university's student diversity, Brown said that CAU must "respond to planet Earth." He talked about how it would be great for this university to possess "high-achieving" students of other races in addition to all of its high achieving African- American students.

Under Brown's leadership Hampton University and Savannah State University became accredited; CAU will be no different, he said.

"This will be the biggest and baddest of the three -- hands down," he said.

Brown also spoke about how CAU's location is vital in pursuing this goal. "We're in Atlanta. We have CNN, Fox, and Turner here," he said.

Many students still have mixed feelings about the faculty layoffs as far as who stayed and who was let go or brought back, but Brown said these changes are "permanent." He also wanted students to know that he considered every one of their calls and emails.

"We have read, studied and have talked about every single email," Brown said. He said that decisions for reinstatement were based on many things such as a "necessary set of skills" and an "assessment in error."

If CAU's student body increases, faculty who were laid off will have the first shot at being rehired for a three-year period, Brown said.

He said that there was "no avoiding a great deal of pain" in making these layoffs but that everyone must "press on."

He also promised that changes as weighty as these will never again happen mid-semester.

Brown said that CAU needs to focus on "control [ling] our own personal persona." He also said that everyone must "continue to impact the quality of our name and brand."

"The future is determined by the decisions we make today," Brown said.

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Anastasia Semien writes for The Panther, the Clark Atlanta University student newspaper, which originally published this article.