

## FAMU's Interim President Missed Students' Greatness

Contributed by Driadonna Roland - Black College Wire  
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Castell Bryant blasted her alma mater.

Florida A&M University's former interim president, Castell V. Bryant, quit in May, less than two months before our 10th president, James Ammons, was to arrive.

That move was incomprehensible. How do you weather the storm for two years and quit right before your time would expire

anyway?

Unsurprisingly, Bryant is bitter and has gone on to blast her alma mater in an interview in the St. Petersburg Times.

As a senior, I can admit I am not graduating with overwhelming nostalgia in my heart. FAMU has been a four-year headache

brought on largely by administrative issues. Hearing the interim president the top administrator lambaste

her institution in the media brings disgrace first and foremost to herself.

She did not successfully complete the task she was entrusted to perform and she is upset? What about the students she

was supposed to serve? Here's what she thinks of her constituents:

"I'll give FAMU students a two," she said.  
(On a scale of 1 to 4, with 4 being the best.) "But that's awful because we accept them and we could help more be  
successful."

While she does place some blame on the university, she basically says it's FAMU's fault for accepting substandard students.

Let's keep it funky. I can attest to being disappointed at times by the caliber of students on campus. But I have

consistently been disgusted and appalled by the leadership of the university.

That includes everyone from the rude, unhelpful employees to the

disorganized administrators and some pompous, inaccessible  
faculty members.

Every year, there is a problem with the dispensation of football  
season or homecoming activity tickets. Or more clubs and  
organizations are asked to provide more services with less funding.

You read the headlines this year. Campus employees (students,  
professors and others) went a semester and longer without  
receiving paychecks from FAMU.

Reflect a moment on an exchange between Bertier and Julius in  
"Remember the Titans," where Bertier, the  
racist quarterback, accused Julius of having a poor attitude  
because Julius did not beg the black players to pay attention to  
Bertier's calls: "Attitude reflects leadership," Julius  
said.

So the leader of our university for the past two years leaves her post  
with a horrible attitude and turns on the students.

You give the students a 2, Castell?

In 1997, Time magazine and the Princeton Review named FAMU College of  
the Year. In 1992 and 1997, we recruited more National  
Merit finalists than Ivy League schools, and tied with Harvard in 2000.

Florida A&M University is the  
No. 1 producer of black baccalaureates in this  
country. Just last year, Black Enterprise  
magazine named us the No. 1 school in the country for black students.  
But let's understand that underneath stats and facts  
lie people.

People like me are not 2s, and neither are the students whose company I keep.

FAMU recruited me three years ago, when I was a National Merit  
Finalist in the top 10 percent of my high school class, with a

near-perfect GPA and four advanced placement classes.

Howard University offered me a full ride, and I was offered scholarships at Michigan State University and the University of Michigan.

And I'm a 2? How so, when I have continued to excel? This summer, the New York Times selected 30 of the best student

journalists in the country to be reporters in New Orleans, and I was one of them. This year, student Jessica Larche won three Hearst

Awards (commonly referred to as the "College Pulitzer Prize") in one year!

But Bryant gives FAMU students a 2 out of 4?

Girlfriend, please count these last two years as the greatest failure of your life, for you failed to walk among the 12,000

beautiful black students you were asked to serve, and recognize our greatness.

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