



Dear NCCU Students,



Welcome to the 2017-2018 academic year. It's a time of renewal and recommitment for all Eagles, as we soar into a new season of possibilities and achievements on the sloping hills and verdant green.

As the university's 12<sup>th</sup> chancellor, I am inspired by the vision of NCCU's founder, Dr. James E. Shepard, who was deeply committed to developing students of character through rigorous academic training and a commitment to public service – principles we still hold dear today.

It is also exciting to consider our institution's 107-year track record of supporting diversity and inclusion. Higher education institutions have at times struggled to keep up with the swiftly changing world around us. But at NCCU, we have long been accustomed to successfully delivering knowledge and opportunity to all who seek it here.

I urge you to seek out opportunities for civic and community involvement. Explore downtown Durham and the rest of the Triangle region. Give back of your time and talent as a volunteer to worthy causes – many of which can be found right here at our institution.

We are part of one of the most vibrant regions in the country, a science, technology and entrepreneurship hub that holds potential for each member of our campus community. Make the most of your own assets by engaging with the creator sand innovators throughout this region. Synergy often sparks the flame of creativity and leads to new ideas.

Finally, I urge you to stay attuned to the university calendar and take advantage of the many enlightening speakers, forums, public events and opportunities that occur year-round on campus. These programs range from educational seminars and political discussions to courses and lectures designed to bring deeper understanding of our community and culture.

I am proud, and I hope you are, too, to be associated with this pre-eminent public institution whose commitment to excellence has produced scholars, change agents and innovators since 1910. Here's to yet another year of NCCU soaring!

In Truth and Service,

Dr. Johnson O. Akinleye  
Chancellor