

We should preserve the future of ASU, not destroy it

Written by News Desk

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By BOB MARTIN

Last week I asked the question: Does Higher Ed need a different type of governance? Then I cited some of the many recent revelations concerning the current situation at Alabama State University in Montgomery.

I wrote that as the problems and revelations about Alabama State University make the headlines every day or so, it has occurred to me that they probably aren't exclusive to ASU and raise the question of whether or not all of our institutions of higher learning need a different type of governance or at least a broader base of inclusion on their closeted boards.

I asserted that the problems pouring out of that school appear to be lax governance, no governance at all in some instances, or corrupt governance.

I knew I would be receiving a call from my long-time acquaintance and friend Donald Watkins, who served on the school's Board of Trustees several years back and whose father Dr. Levi Watkins was ASU's president for many years, long before the current problems arose.

I stand by those comments, but also want to point out that this is an institution with a long history of good work as the state's major predominantly African American university; and I also

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say to Gov. Bentley we all should be working to preserve its future, and not to destroy it.

I promised Donald I would give him all the ink necessary to state his case.

In the meantime I should point out that all of the school's expenditures have been placed online at the state's Open Checkbook website since 2008 and the school asserts it has worked to get all of its' records online for public access in a timely fashion.

The Governor's audit of the university has already cost the state over \$600,000 and only \$17,000 remains in that appropriation. It's time to get this situation resolved and move on.

Bronner says governor sticking head in the sand

Retirement Systems of Alabama Dr. David Bronner is back on the governor's case about Medicaid. Here's his most recent statement: "I couldn't care less if you love or hate Obamacare! My dad would tell me 'no matter what problems you have today, the sun will rise tomorrow.' But to stick our head in the sand and think we are helping ourselves or the 300,000+ Alabamians by rejecting the expansion of Medicaid is simply nuts!

"Alabama would be rejecting \$1.5 billion per year for three years with no requirement to spend any state money over the 100% federally funded expansion. By not accepting OUR money to help ourselves, we might as well form "a circle for a firing squad" of our personal and state interest.

"Alabamians have 60 days to politely help our governor, "Doc" Bentley, remember what was the best virtue of the first governor I worked with. George Wallace, like all of us, made lots of mistakes. The one mistake he did not make was that he always cared for the poor of Alabama because he grew up dirt poor.

"Let's help not only Alabama's poor but all Alabamians by offering better health care and

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creating jobs and economic growth. Please encourage our governor to stand up for all Alabamians and sign on to bring billions of our dollars home with the Medicaid expansion." Amen David.

SEC back to where it is accustomed to being

The SEC now has six of the top 15 teams in the Bowl Championship Series (BCS), 13 teams in the Associated Press Top 25 and six of the top 15 in the Coaches Poll, all three polls released Sunday. The league had no teams enter or drop out of the polls this week. The fact that the league's six ranked teams went 4-0 Saturday -- Alabama and LSU had byes -- had the teams generally trending up, with most nudging up one spot in both polls.

The six in the BCS standings are No. 1, Alabama; No. 8, Missouri; No. 9, Auburn; No. 12, South Carolina; No. 13 LSU and No. 15, Texas A&M. A week ago, the league had six of the top 14 teams in the AP Poll and six of the top 16 in the Coaches Poll. The most notable move was by Auburn, which can now say it's a Top 10 team in BCS, the AP and the Coaches polls. After being ranked No. 11 last week by the coaches, Auburn moved up to No. 10 this week after a 35-17 win over Arkansas. The Tigers moved up one spot in the AP Poll to No. 7. The Harris Poll and the USA Today poll, which, along with a computer, decide the BCS standings, ranked Auburn at No. 11.