

Dear ____:

I am very pleased to invite you to the **Leadership Summit on Higher Education** being held on Monday, December 17, 2001, in Jackson at the Hilton Hotel.

The summit will begin promptly at 10:30 a.m. in the ____Room of the Hilton, continue through lunch, and conclude at 2:00 p.m.

Since May, a broad-based 45-member steering committee of fellow Mississippians, co-chaired by Aubrey Patterson of BankcorpSouth and myself, has guided and overseen a process to develop a forward looking and goal oriented agenda for all of our colleges and universities -- public and private and two-year and four-year. This has been the process facilitated by the Center for Public Higher Education Trusteeship and Governance at the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges.

The results of the steering committee's work, *Building Opportunity in Mississippi Through Higher Education*, will be formally released at the leadership summit. We believe that it will help advance the competitiveness of our State and improve the quality of life of our citizens. An executive summary is enclosed.

Building Opportunity in Mississippi Through Higher Education builds on the good work of several previous commissions, reports, and projects that have moved Mississippi forward. It is focused on six major priorities recommending what higher education can do to advance our state. As the steering committee's work progressed we were reminded again and again that education is all one system -- that we cannot talk about higher education in isolation from early childhood education, our schools, and life-long learning. Thus in many instances, the steering committee suggests what the State and all of education, can and must do to address the challenges we face.

Partners and advocates from all corners of Mississippi will be necessary if this agenda is to have its desired positive effects and advance Mississippi. The leadership summit brings together the Mississippi leaders of state government, the business community, and higher education, as well as other civic leaders of our state. You will have an opportunity to learn about *Building Opportunity in Mississippi Through Higher Education*, and review and react to our efforts. Our invited guests include Jim Barksdale and Mark Musick from the Southern Regional Education Board.

Please join with me at the Leadership Summit on December 17. To RSVP, please call (Godwin Group) ____ at (601--).

Sincerely,

Governor Ronnie Musgrove