

Shadowing the President

On Monday March 9, 2020, I was invited to join Dr. Howard for a day, to shadow him in his role as the President of Lamar Institute of Technology and the behind the scene items that he deals with on a day to day basis. Our morning started off with me meeting him in his office promptly at 8:00 a.m. and a phone call a few minutes later after being welcomed.

The phone conference was with Mr. Bill Allen President and CEO of Greater Beaumont Chamber of Commerce at 8:12 a.m. to discuss workforce for the greater Houston partnership between LIT and Dr. Howard. We discussed our service area within the schools and the 54 billion dollar economic plan as well as boundaries between each of the local TSUS schools. Dr. Howard then sent out several other emails to external stakeholders pertaining to regional meetings.

Then it was off to the President's Cabinet meeting where Dr. Howard discussed the Corona Virus COVID-19 plan. Dr. Mix gave in detail the campus contingency plan and how the message would go out. The Department Chairs discussed the plan for campus closure and classes being solely on line and I was even asked my input which made me feel a part of the Team. It was also discussed about improving the cabinet because the role is to advise the President on substantial things that will impact the college.

I learned some of the roles and responsibilities of Dr. Hill who was the Dean of Students at the time, Dr. Mix the VP and Department Chairs. It takes all hands on deck in order for the campus to function, every employee must know what he or she is responsible for, they discussed that leaders cannot lead from behind the desk get involved in campus. The consistency and continuity in our leadership succession and planning is important Dr. Howard explained to the team. In the time I spent shadowing the president, I found out it is not a job to take lightly and he deals with a lot of aspects known and unknown of the college.

I did appreciate the opportunity to shadow Dr. Howard and get a glimpse of what his days are like, I learned a lot in that short period of time and would encourage others to take up the opportunity to see how things run in the background to the forefront.

It was a day full of excitement; Dr. Howard's energy is unmatched-he showed professionalism, was ethical, and transparent. Which goes with what I believe that a "Crew is only as good as its leader" and with all the growth and opportunities in the past 4 years he has shown and proved to be a "Great Leader" as he mentioned to me remember "Every day Is An Interview".

Nicole Mitchell